

# Analysis of the Impact of Storytelling on Audience Engagement Through Increased Viewing Frequency of the Digital Business Study Program Profile Video on Instagram

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**Abstract.** This study aims to examine the effect of frequency of watching storytelling-based videos on audience response to the profile video of the Digital Business Study Program at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia. Instagram, as a social media platform that prioritizes visual content, provides a unique opportunity for brands to build deeper emotional communication with audiences. Using descriptive quantitative research methods, this study compares the performance of storytelling-based content with conventional content through analysis of Instagram Insights metrics that include consumer response metrics, such as engagement, interaction, and influence on audience response. Data analysis was conducted to evaluate and compare how storytelling increases video viewing frequency and its impact on audience response compared to other content. The findings provide practical implications for the development of digital content strategies, particularly in the context of higher education institution marketing, by showing that storytelling can be an effective approach to increase audience engagement on social media platforms.

**Keywords:** Viewing frequency, video, storytelling, audience response, social media.

## Introduction

In today's digital era, when media consumption is increasing rapidly, the importance of understanding how to utilize social media platforms to attract audience attention in marketing strategies is increasing. The Digital Business Study Program at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, which was officially established on

April 10, 2019, is a concrete solution to face the challenges of the Society 5.0 era. This program plays an important role in producing professionals in the field of digital business and supporting the acceleration of digital innovation towards a more efficient and sustainable business. With a vision to become a pioneer and leader in digital business at the national level and recognized at the ASEAN level by 2025, this study program shows a strong commitment in developing digital technology-based education.

The graduate profile of the UPI Digital Business Study Program is designed to meet the needs of the growing digital industry. In a highly dynamic digital era, UPI Digital Business Study Program recognizes the vital role of social media as one of the key elements in business transformation. Through a comprehensive approach in its curriculum, this study program equips students with an in-depth understanding of the social media ecosystem, not only as a communication platform, but also as a strategic instrument in digital business development.

This phenomenon is all the more relevant given the significant changes in digital content consumption patterns, particularly in terms of viewing frequency on social media platforms. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok and YouTube have created an ecosystem that has substantially increased the intensity of digital content viewing. The characteristics of social media that offer short, easily accessible content and personalized algorithms have changed user behavior from passive viewers to active and persistent content consumers. In 2021, a survey by the Pew Research Center found that the majority of social media users in the United States actively use YouTube and Facebook, while younger audiences tend to use Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok. While this data is US-based, similar patterns are evident across countries, demonstrating the importance of platforms like Instagram in audience engagement. The survey also shows that the daily activity of social media users is very high, especially among teens and Gen Z; for example, 71% of Instagram users aged 18-29 visit their account daily, with half of them visiting multiple times a day (Auxier et al., 2021). Modern social media platforms have successfully created an environment that facilitates instant and continuous content consumption, where infinite scroll mechanisms and personalized content recommendations effectively increase the duration and frequency of user interactions.

The frequency of content viewing on social media has increased significantly, both in terms of the amount and duration as well as the level of user engagement. Viewing frequency refers to how often users access and engage with different types of content on social media platforms. Today, many users spend hours each day browsing content, ranging from short videos to live broadcasts. Features such as Stories, Reels, and live streaming have proven to be effective in capturing users' attention significantly, encouraging them to engage more and return more frequently to access new content (Pew Research Center, 2021).

Instagram is a potential medium for media literacy advocacy, especially among the younger generation in Indonesia. According to data from We Are Social, Indonesia has the fourth highest number of Instagram users in the world, with a total of 89.15 million people. Instagram, with its main focus on visual content, has come up with various features that allow users to share photos and videos and interact through comments, likes and shares. The platform also offers various content formats such as photo posts, stories, and video reels designed to make content easy to share and increase audience engagement. According to a Pew Research Center survey, the majority of Instagram users report that they access the platform daily, with 73% of those aged 18 to 29 doing so regularly, including many who visit multiple times a day. This indicates a high level of user engagement with content on social media. This diversity of features opens up great opportunities for the development of effective storytelling strategies.

Storytelling, or the art of storytelling, has become an increasingly popular strategy in the utilization of social media. This technique has proven to be effective in conveying messages and building emotional connections with audiences. Research by Alfajri et al. (2019) shows that the narrative approach in storytelling can significantly increase audience engagement on social media platforms, especially Instagram. Through a combination of attractive visual content, storytelling is carried out in three stages: planning, production, and evaluation, increasing engagement, and ultimately influencing audience behavior. According to Miller (2020), although there are various definitions of digital storytelling, there are three important elements in common, namely in the form of narratives, using digital platforms, and aiming to attract audience attention (engaging).

For example, in the context of an educational organization or institution, stories about the experiences of students or lecturers can provide a truer picture of the learning environment and the values upheld. This narrative approach not only makes the content more interesting but also helps to create an emotional connection that can strengthen audience response and engagement in the long run. In keeping with the vision of Society 5.0 that integrates technology for the well-being of society, storytelling on digital platforms plays an important role in improving communication in higher education. This approach helps institutions reach tech-savvy audiences, provide emotional and informative engagement, and help prospective students make more informed educational choices.

Audience response to storytelling on social media can be measured through several metrics, one of which is profile visits. Profile visits are an indicator of audience interest in the account that uploaded the content. The higher the number of audiences who visit the profile after viewing a content, the greater their interest in the information or services offered by the account (Bernatta & Kartika, 2020).

Effective storytelling encourages audiences to explore further, increasing the chances of profile visits. In addition, the success of storytelling can also be seen through engagement metrics such as reach, impression impressions, and likes, comments, and shares. Reach measures the total number of audiences exposed to the content, while impressions look at the frequency with which the content appears in a user's feed, although it can be repeated on the same user. Interactions reflect the active engagement of the audience, indicating their deep interest in the content. The increase in these metrics demonstrates the effectiveness of storytelling in building brand awareness and increasing wider audience engagement.

Instagram, with features such as Stories and Reels, provides greater opportunities for visual storytelling to reach a wider audience. Stories, for example, enables storytelling in a short format that can provide an immediate experience for the audience. This feature also supports the use of various visual elements, such as text, stickers, and music, which can enrich storytelling. For Reels, it allows the presentation of longer videos that can convey stories in more detail and creatively. The use of these features helps increase the engagement rate, which is one of the main indicators of successful storytelling on social media (Aripradono, 2020).

This research aims to provide new insights into the effectiveness of storytelling in increasing audience engagement on social media platforms as well as practical contributions to higher education marketing communication strategies. This research is expected to provide insights into how storytelling can be used in the context of higher education to attract prospective students and increase their engagement.

In addition to contributing to the academic literature, this research also provides practical benefits for marketing communications of higher education programs. By exploring the use of storytelling in social media for educational purposes, the results of this study are expected to help educational institutions in designing more effective social media content, focusing on increasing brand awareness and engagement.

In this research, metrics such as profile visit, reach, and impression will be analyzed to understand the effectiveness of storytelling-based content. This analysis will provide an overview of how much the audience is interested in looking further into the study program profile after watching the storytelling video.

## Methods

This research uses a quantitative descriptive method, which provides a numerical representation of trends, behaviors, or attitudes within a specific sample (Creswell, 2014). The quantitative research method relies on numerical data and emphasizes the objective measurement of outcomes through statistical analysis. The primary focus in quantitative research is typically on gathering data and making generalizations to explain specific phenomena encountered (Jupp V, 2015). According to Umami (2020), descriptive research tends to analyze data at a surface level and does not prioritize meaning. Descriptive research focuses solely on the process of a phenomenon and does not emphasize depth in data or meaning. In terms of media-based storytelling, previous studies highlight the role of visual and emotional elements in fostering audience engagement. Aripadono (2020) notes that storytelling on visually-driven platforms like Instagram can enhance brand-audience emotional closeness, while Kim et al. (2016) demonstrate that storytelling effectively shapes brand image and loyalty through both cognitive and emotional engagement. In this study, we adopt a quantitative descriptive approach with secondary data from Instagram Insights, focusing on audience response metrics for the Digital Business Study Program profile video at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UPI).

In this study, the researcher utilizes Instagram as a social media platform for the Digital Business Department at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UPI). The **digitalbusiness.upi** account serves as one of the online communication tools to engage with its audience. This research focuses on comparing Instagram Reels content with other Reels and Feed posts by examining the differences in quality between storytelling content and standard informational content. Additionally, the study aims to analyze the impact of storytelling elements in enhancing audience engagement and interaction compared to conventional informative posts.

In this study, primary data is collected by utilizing the Instagram Insights feature. The analysis of this feature reveals specific characteristics of its usage, which are examined in the study. Instagram Insights provides various analytical data, including *interaction* and *discovery*. The *interaction* feature records visitor activities that provide feedback. Interaction data includes the number of *likes*, *comments*, *shares*, and *saves* that have been aggregated. Additionally, the feature also includes data on *Reach* (the total number of audiences exposed to content within a certain period) and *Impressions* (the total number of visitors who have viewed the published content) (Alfajri et al. 2019).

This study focuses on analyzing data from the Instagram Reels Profile Video of the Digital Business. All analyses derived from Instagram Insights will serve as the primary discussion in this research. These

findings will then be compared to non-storytelling or informational content to strengthen the data and provide measurable results. This approach aims to offer a clearer picture of the effectiveness of storytelling content.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **•Unpacking the Engagement Gap on UPI Digital Business Instagram**

Instagram has become a primary platform for increasing awareness and engagement for many organizations, including the Digital Business program at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UPI). However, challenges often arise when published content fails to generate the expected level of engagement, even with a substantial follower base. In this context, the effectiveness of Instagram content is measured not only by the quantity of posts but also by the reach and interactions generated, especially when compared to the number of followers. If the reach or impressions are significantly lower than the follower count, this indicates challenges in the content strategy being employed.

One common issue is the lack of depth in content presentation. Many posts merely provide direct information without incorporating strong narratives or storytelling, making the content feel flat and unable to retain audience attention. Research shows that storytelling creates deeper emotional connections, making audiences feel more engaged and inclined to follow or even share the content (Kim & Jia, 2020). If the published content consists only of text or images that are purely informative without considering narrative elements, audiences are likely to lose interest quickly.

Additionally, a lack of variety in content formats can make the account appear monotonous. Instagram offers various formats, such as Reels, Stories, IGTV, and Carousel, which can be utilized to enhance visual appeal and invite interaction. However, if an account focuses solely on one format, such as static photos or promotional images, the audience may become bored. Instagram users are generally more drawn to visually engaging or interactive content, such as short videos or slideshows, which provide a more dynamic experience.

Overly formal or less interactive content is another challenge, as it tends to feel rigid and fails to invite active audience participation. Typically, Instagram users prefer light, relatable, and informal interactions. If every post consists only of promotions or announcements without encouraging interaction (e.g., through questions, polls, or calls to comment), engagement levels are likely to remain low, even if the account has a large follower base.

Moreover, the underutilization of analytics tools is also a hindrance. One of Instagram's strengths is its insights feature, which provides data on reach, engagement, and impressions. However, if this data is not analyzed regularly, it becomes difficult to identify which types of content are successful and which are not. Regularly analyzing this data allows teams to quickly recognize ineffective content and make the necessary adjustments. For instance, if a specific post's engagement is low, the team can experiment with different formats or topics for subsequent posts.

Consistency and posting frequency are also crucial factors that cannot be overlooked. Instagram's algorithm tends to favor accounts that consistently post high-quality content. If the UPI Digital Business

account lacks a regular posting schedule, it can negatively impact the impressions received, even among existing followers. Planning content with a well-organized schedule can help increase the account's presence in followers' feeds.

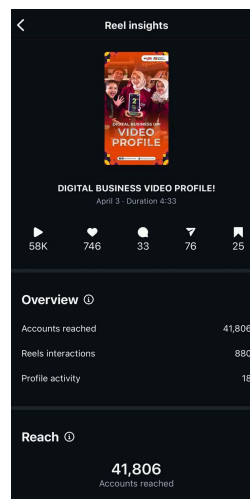
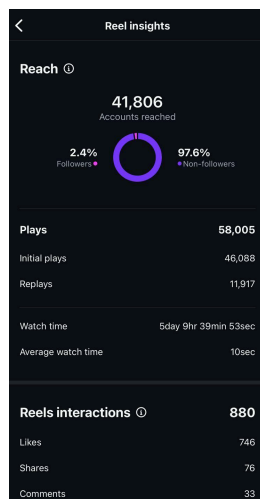
A storytelling approach could be a solution to strengthen messages and make content more engaging. For example, instead of merely sharing information about the study program, the UPI Digital Business account could feature student success stories or unique learning experiences. Through storytelling, audiences would feel more emotionally connected, which could enhance their willingness to interact with the content. Utilizing various Instagram content formats, such as Reels and IGTV, and regularly monitoring analytics data, can provide deeper insights into what the audience truly desires. These steps are expected to improve content effectiveness and drive broader reach in proportion to the account's follower base.

- Instagram Reach Data for UPI Digital Business

In efforts to increase audience awareness and engagement, videos employing a storytelling approach have proven effective in broadening reach and deepening interactions. This technique not only conveys information but also creates a more personal experience, allowing audiences to feel more connected to the conveyed message. Research demonstrates that storytelling can enhance content appeal and boost audience participation (Kim & Jia, 2020). This approach has been shown to strengthen emotional connections and improve interaction quality, encouraging audiences to engage with the content more deeply.

The same applies to the profile video for UPI Digital Business. By adopting a storytelling approach, the video successfully expanded its reach and boosted audience engagement through a more personal and captivating experience. Insights analysis from Instagram data revealed that the storytelling approach not only captured audience attention but also maintained higher interaction levels compared to more conventional content, such as feed posts consisting solely of still images without strong visual or audio narratives.

Utilizing Instagram's analytics features provides a deeper understanding of how audiences respond to the content presented. Through this analysis, it was evident that storytelling videos could attract more audiences and generate higher interaction, proving the effectiveness of the storytelling content strategy in driving deeper audience engagement.



## **Figure 1.1 & 1.2 Insights from the Instagram Reels Profile Video of UPI's Digital Business Program**

Findings from the reach and interaction data of the profile video for UPI's Digital Business Program underscore the effectiveness of storytelling in achieving better engagement outcomes. Below are key insights derived from the reach and interaction data:

### 1. Broader Audience Reach

The profile video employing a storytelling approach significantly expanded audience reach, as evidenced by the 41,806 total views recorded. Notably, 97.6% of these views came from non-followers, demonstrating that the video not only captured the attention of the program's existing followers but also extended its reach to a wider audience beyond the internal community. This success highlights storytelling's potential to attract prospective students who may not yet be familiar with UPI's Digital Business Program, making it an effective tool for introducing the program's identity and values to new audiences.

### 2. Indicators of Content Relevance and Appeal

The high replay rate, with 11,917 replays out of 58,005 total views (approximately 20%), indicates that the narrative presented in the video resonated strongly with viewers. This level of interest reflects the content's ability to not only capture attention but also sustain audience engagement, demonstrating storytelling's effectiveness in maintaining viewer interest.

### 3. High Audience Interaction

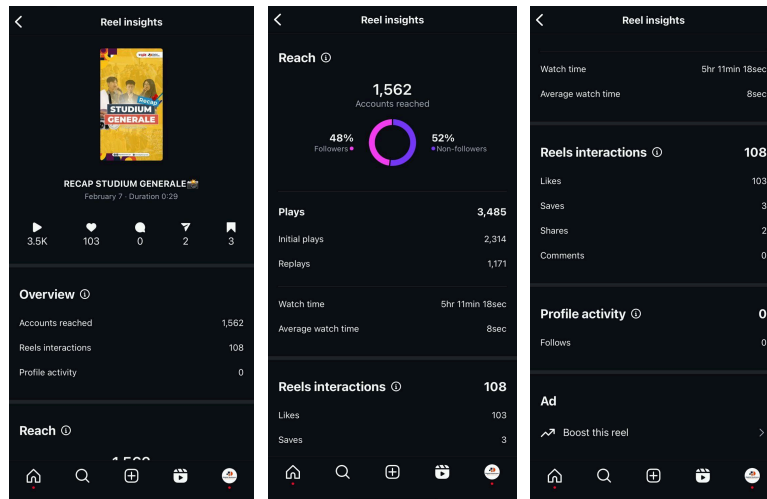
The storytelling-based profile video recorded 880 interactions, including likes, comments, and shares, accounting for 2.1% of the total reach. This is an impressive figure for institutional content, indicating that storytelling effectively drives audience engagement beyond mere viewership.

### 4. Sharing and Saving Behavior

The video's success is further evident in its being shared 76 times and saved 25 times by viewers. These metrics highlight storytelling's ability to create a broader impact by encouraging audiences to share positive experiences within their networks while also viewing the content as valuable enough to save for future reference.

#### • Comparison of Instagram Reels Data: Storytelling Profile Video vs. Standard Informational Content

Unlike storytelling content, which has the ability to build emotional connections, informative content or non-storytelling content typically focuses on delivering facts and information directly. While such content is important, it often lacks the ability to foster deep engagement with the audience as it does not feature a narrative that evokes empathy or curiosity. Below is a comparative analysis of insights drawn from the non-storytelling content shared by the Digital Business Study Program at UPI.



**Figure 1.3, 1.4, & 1.2** Insights from Instagram Reels Non-Storytelling Content of the Digital Business Program at UPI

The comparison of insights between the storytelling content in images 1.1 and 1.2 and the non-storytelling content in images 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5 highlights the differences in their appeal and effectiveness.

Storytelling in digital content offers greater appeal compared to standard informative content due to its more personal and emotional approach. When a story is told, audiences tend to feel a deeper connection with the narrative, making them more interested in further engagement. Storytelling creates an experience that resonates emotionally and evokes empathy, which is rarely found in straightforward, factual informative content. According to research by Kim and Jia (2020), storytelling is effective in capturing audience interest and strengthening the emotional bond with the content being presented. This not only broadens reach but also deepens interactions, ultimately enhancing audience participation in engaging with the content.

Another advantage of storytelling is its ability to maintain audience attention for a longer period. Storytelling content allows audiences to follow the development of a narrative, creating a sense of curiosity and a desire to know what happens next. The engaging narrative in storytelling has the power to keep audiences hooked for extended periods because they feel connected to the storyline and its characters. In contrast to more rigid and direct informative content, storytelling adds an emotional dimension that not only encourages audiences to listen but also enables them to engage more deeply with the message. As a result, audiences feel more valued and motivated to interact further with the content, whether through likes, comments, or shares.

Data analysis from the Instagram account of the Digital Business Study Program at UPI reveals a significant difference between content using a storytelling approach through profile videos and standard informative content. The data, including insights, impressions, interactions, and profile visits, provides a clear picture of the effectiveness of storytelling in capturing and maintaining audience attention.

1. Insight



Content utilizing storytelling through profile videos generated insights with significantly higher metrics. This is evident from the high number of views and the increasing interactions following the video upload. The profile video content reached 58,005 views, while the non-storytelling content recorded only 3,485 views (including 2,314 initial plays and 1,171 replays). These insights indicate that profile videos not only attract new audiences but also maintain engagement for a longer period compared to standard informative content. For example, the insights from the profile video show a substantial increase in watch duration and user activity on the platform, highlighting the effectiveness of storytelling in fostering deeper and more sustained connections with the audience.

## 2. Impressions

The profile video content with a storytelling approach recorded significantly higher impressions compared to the non-storytelling content. The storytelling video achieved 58,005 impressions, far surpassing the non-storytelling content, which only reached 1,562 accounts. This high number of impressions indicates that audiences were not only interested but also motivated to view the storytelling content multiple times. This suggests that the storytelling approach has a substantial impact on capturing audience attention, encouraging them to explore further the Instagram account of the Digital Business Study Program at UPI and other available content to gain more information about the program.

## 3. Interactions

Interactions (likes, comments, shares) show a marked difference between the two types of content. Storytelling content recorded 880 interactions, nearly twice as many as the non-storytelling content, which only reached 108 interactions (comprising 103 likes, 3 saves, and 2 shares). The high level of interactions with the storytelling content indicates that audiences are more interested and motivated to comment on or share content that features an engaging story and narrative. This highlights that storytelling is effective in creating more significant engagement.

## 4. Profile Visits

The increase in profile visits also serves as an important indicator of the audience's interest in getting to know the study program better. After watching the profile video with storytelling, audiences were more likely to visit the Instagram profile of the study program compared to standard informative content, with 97.6% of the views coming from non-followers. This demonstrates that storytelling is able to capture the audience's attention more profoundly, motivating them to explore further information about the Digital Business Study Program at UPI.

### •Differences Between Storytelling Content (Profile Video) and Non-Storytelling Content

The analysis reveals a significant difference between content using a storytelling approach through profile videos and regular non-storytelling content from the Digital Business Program at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UPI). The profile video with storytelling achieved much higher engagement, reaching 58,005 views and showing consistent interaction growth after being uploaded. In contrast, regular non-storytelling content only garnered 3,485 views, with relatively static engagement.

Storytelling content presents a more personal and fluid narrative, allowing the audience to form a deeper emotional connection with the program. Through storytelling, the profile video not only attracts new viewers but also sustains engagement for a longer period. On the other hand, non-storytelling content, which is more direct and informative, such as activity announcements or achievements, though valuable, struggles to create emotional involvement.

Additionally, the profile video with storytelling successfully integrates visual elements, personal narratives from students and faculty, and a more comprehensive view of the learning experience, creating a vivid portrayal of student life in the Digital Business Program at UPI. In contrast, non-storytelling content, which is more informational, received lower engagement, with only 108 interactions, including 103 likes, 3 saves, and 2 shares.

- Discussion on Audience Response to Profile Visits and Interest in the Digital Business Program

An analysis of the data from storytelling content on Instagram Reels reveals that audiences who watched the profile video of the Digital Business Program at UPI were more inclined to seek further information about the program, as evidenced by the increase in profile visits. In the context of social media, profile visits serve as a key indicator of initial interest and curiosity about a topic or entity. When viewers are captivated by the content, they are more likely to visit the profile to gain a deeper understanding. In the case of storytelling content, the surge in profile visits can be attributed to the emotional connection audiences experience with the narrative, such as personal stories from students and their learning experiences.

According to research by Green and Brock (2000) and Escalas (2004), storytelling that incorporates personal experiences can generate greater interest among audiences. This approach allows viewers to relate to the individual experiences shared in the content, triggering emotional engagement and making the message more memorable. Storytelling that includes real, relatable experiences also helps the audience visualize the benefits of a program, such as the Digital Business Program, in the context of their own lives. This stands in contrast to traditional informational content, which is primarily focused on presenting facts. Storytelling, by showcasing values and experiences in a more vivid way, appeals to new audiences who may not have been familiar with the Digital Business Program at UPI but become interested upon seeing its relevance to their lives.

Furthermore, data indicates that a significant portion of the profile visits came from non-followers, highlighting the success of the storytelling content in reaching audiences outside of the existing follower base. This is strategically advantageous for educational institutions aiming to attract potential new students. Storytelling that highlights campus life, the learning environment, and the values of the program helps create a more tangible image of the benefits of studying digital business. As such, storytelling not only serves as an effective means of capturing initial attention but also enhances audience interest and enthusiasm, encouraging them to explore further content and potentially take more significant steps, such as considering enrollment.

- Effectiveness of Storytelling

The success of storytelling in profile videos can be assessed through several key performance indicators. First, retention and repetition rates are highlighted by 11,917 replays out of 58,005 total views. This figure suggests that approximately one in five viewers chose to watch the content again, a strong indication of the relevance and appeal of the narrative presented. Audience engagement is also reflected in the 880 interactions generated, which, while seemingly modest, represents 2.1% of the total reach—an impressive achievement for institutional content. More significantly, 18 profile activities recorded demonstrate the content's success in prompting viewers to explore further information about the academic program. The viral aspect of the storytelling is evident in the 76 shares, indicating that the content was compelling enough to encourage viewers to share it voluntarily with their networks. Additionally, the 25 saves suggest that the content was deemed valuable for future reference. The dominance of non-followers in the audience composition (97.6%) illustrates the storytelling's effectiveness in attracting attention beyond the existing community. This achievement is particularly strategic for educational institutions aiming to reach potential students who are generally not yet connected with the program's social media accounts.

These performance indicators collectively show that storytelling in profile videos is not only effective in capturing audience attention but also in sustaining deep engagement. Beyond the numbers, the impact of storytelling is reflected in the quality of interactions and the ongoing emotional connection from the audience, as evidenced by the Digital Business Program at UPI. Videos utilizing a storytelling approach have demonstrated significant improvements across several key aspects, including:

1. Viewer Retention

Videos that employ a storytelling approach are more effective in maintaining viewer attention for longer periods compared to traditional informational content. This is evidenced by a higher completion rate, indicating that audiences are more likely to watch the entire video when presented in a narrative format.

2. Emotional Engagement

Storytelling successfully fosters a stronger emotional connection with the audience. This is reflected in the increased number of personal and insightful comments, where viewers share their experiences or express a genuine interest in the academic program.

3. Long-Term Impact

The storytelling approach has demonstrated a more lasting impact on viewers. Audiences exposed to storytelling content are more likely to explore additional content from the program, as seen in the rise of profile visits and engagement with subsequent posts. This suggests that the narrative format not only captures immediate interest but also cultivates sustained interaction with the brand.

## **Conclusion**

The storytelling approach has proven effective in increasing the frequency of views and audience interaction with the video profile content of the Digital Business Study Program at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UPI) on Instagram. Analytical data shows that storytelling is capable of attracting more audience attention, with a wide reach covering up to 97.6% of non-followers. The significant repeat view

rate and higher interactions (likes, comments, and shares) indicate that storytelling creates a stronger emotional connection compared to regular informative content.

This approach not only increases the number of views but also motivates the audience to explore further, as seen from the increase in profile visits. Overall, storytelling has become an effective content strategy for introducing the identity and values of the study program as well as increasing engagement on social media.

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