

Baznas' integrated marketing communication strategy in building brand equity

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Abstract:

Indonesia boasts immense zakat potential—approximately IDR 327.6 trillion—yet realizes only 10% due to low literacy, eroded trust in official institutions, and entrenched informal practices via musollas, foundations, and direct aid to mustahik. This study examines how BAZNAS optimizes its IMC (Integrated Marketing Communication) strategy to broaden reach, bolster trust, and foster muzakki loyalty to official channels. Employing a qualitative, descriptive-exploratory approach, it draws on purposive in-depth interviews, analyzed via thematic development, data reduction, and inference for recommendations. Findings reveal BAZNAS deploys three of eight IMC elements—product advertising, personal selling, public relations, and mobile marketing—anchored by the "Cahaya Zakat" umbrella message. Its brand equity stems from governmental authority, national coordination via provincial/district BAZDA networks, the 3A principles (Safe Syar'i, Safe Regulation, Safe NKRI), and personalized rituals like prayer recitation, sustaining muzakki commitment.

Keywords: mobile marketing; national economy; official zakat institutions; public relations; Shari'a.

INTRODUCTION

Zakat is an obligation for Muslims, especially for those who are able, zakat is one of the pillars of Islam that must be carried out (Khan et al., 2018). The command to pay zakat is stated in the Quran, one of which is in Q.S. Al-Baqarah: 277, namely: Indeed, those who believe, do righteous deeds, establish prayer and pay zakat, they will have their reward with their Lord. There is no fear for them, nor will they grieve. And in Q.S At-Taubah: 103 "Take zakat from some of their wealth, with which you purify and purify them, and pray for them. Indeed, your prayer is (to be) peace of mind for them. Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing."

Zakat, besides functioning to purify wealth for muzaki (zakat payers) and increase concern for others, is also an economic instrument that provides a positive influence through a fair and sustainable wealth distribution mechanism that can encourage increased purchasing power, reduce poverty levels, and increase the opening of employment opportunities, and stimulate economic growth (Direktorat Kajian dan Pengembangan Badan Amil Zakat Nasional, 2024).

Several studies have described zakat as an Islamic social finance instrument with a multiplier effect on the Muslim economy (Mufidah et al., 2021). With proper distribution, zakat can increase household consumption in eligible recipients, strengthen micro-enterprise capital, and boost productivity in the real sector. This confirms that zakat is not merely a ritual act of worship but also a strategic instrument for sustainable development (Ascarya, 2022).

Indonesia is very well known as the most generous country in 2023 based on the World Giving Index (World Giving Report, 2023), but in 2025, the average level of donations of Indonesian citizens decreased to position 21. Despite the decrease, Indonesian citizens on average still have a high level of mutual help, where nine out of ten people (90%) helped their friends or family at least once in 2024. This figure is the highest in Indonesia (98%) and the lowest in Japan (68%) (World Giving Report, 2025).

This fact demonstrates the strong social capital in Indonesia. The high level of mutual cooperation and mutual aid presents a significant opportunity to optimize zakat collection, particularly through communication strategies that can transform spontaneous generosity into structured contributions through formal institutions like BAZNAS.

The potential for zakat in Indonesia is very large, in 2023 amounting to IDR 327.6 trillion and only realized absorption in 2023 amounting to IDR 33 trillion or around 10%. The potential for zakat is based on the number of Muslim population in Indonesia is very large, equivalent to 12.30% of the global Muslim population, demographic bonus, high level of generosity, increase in the number of middle class population by 70% in 2045, the national Zakat Literacy Index (ILZ) shows an increase, reaching a score of 75.26 (category "moderate") in 2022, up from 66.78 in 2020 (Direktorat Kajian dan Pengembangan Badan Amil Zakat Nasional, 2024).

However, the realization figure of 10% of this potential indicates a significant gap between potential and actual collection. This is due to, among other factors, low zakat literacy among some community groups, a lack of understanding that professional zakat is an obligation, and a low perception of the benefits of distributing zakat through official OPZ (Melani et al., 2017).

BAZNAS (National Zakat Agency) is the official institution responsible for national zakat management, which functions to plan, implement, control, report, and account for the collection, distribution, and utilization of zakat. It is assisted by BAZDA at the provincial and district levels, as well as LAZ (Zakat Amil Institutions) initiated by the community (Republik Indonesia, 2011).

In 2022, there were approximately 678 official zakat collection institutions in Indonesia, consisting of 1 Central BAZNAS, 34 Provincial BAZNAS, 514 Regency/City BAZNAS, 36 National LAZ, 33 Provincial LAZ, and 60 Regency/City LAZ (Directorate of Study and Development of the National Zakat Agency, 2024). Meanwhile, according to the Zakat Forum, there are approximately 51 licensed zakat institutions (LAZ) in the National LAZ, 36 Provincial LAZ, and 83 Regency/City LAZ (Sistem Zakat Kementerian Agama RI, 2025).

Despite the high potential for zakat revenue in Indonesia, a major obstacle hindering the official absorption of zakat revenue is the mirage of national zakat management, where seemingly positive zakat growth is driven by ZIS DSKL (Zakat, Infak, Sedekah, and Other Religious Social Funds) recorded off-balance sheet. Since 2018, the contribution of "off-balance sheet" funds has averaged 53.77% of total national zakat collection.

The lack of public awareness of paying zakat through official institutions by the majority of the community (around 38.9%) still pays zakat informally, such as through mosques, prayer rooms, directly to mustahik, religious figures, foundations, and Islamic boarding schools, rather than through official zakat institutions (BAZNAS, LAZ, or Zakat Collection Units/UPZ). The collection of non-OPZ ZIS is estimated to reach IDR 61.26 trillion in 2019-2020, as well as the high number of unofficial OPZ and the existence of unhealthy competition between OPZs are also problems (Direktorat Kajian dan Pengembangan Badan Amil Zakat Nasional, 2024).

This challenge is further complicated in the digital era, as many online donation platforms, unaffiliated with official OPZs, are more aggressive in their promotion and engagement on social media. This forces BAZNAS to strengthen its integrated marketing communications strategy, focusing not only on public education but also on building strong brand equity to encourage public preference for BAZNAS over other channels.

One of the keys to increasing zakat absorption to official institutions is increasing public trust and participation such as potential muzaki from the millennial and Z generation segments, ASN, BUMN and

private employees, middle and upper classes, etc. To improve this, one way is through the implementation of integrated marketing communications (IMC) on product knowledge to increase Brand Equity among the public, especially muzaki.

In a previous study conducted by Fitriansyah Agus Setiawan and Akhmad in their journal entitled Integrated Marketing Communication Strategy at Baznas to Increase Participation of the Indonesian Millennial Generation in Zakat, it was stated that BAZNAS has implemented an IMC strategy in the form of combining advertisements consisting of print, television, radio, digital, and outdoor advertisements to achieve message consistency to the target audience. In addition, it also optimizes communication media to conduct campaigns and product education using the internet, social media, WhatsApp messages, and email, both organically and paid. As well as direct messages, collaboration with influencers, using digital platforms and collaborating with various institutions to be available on 130 digital platforms (Setiawan & Akhmad, 2023).

Research results in the journal state that after BAZNAS implemented IMC, the average growth of BAZNAS zakat collection reached over 20% annually. In 2022, the number of zakat payers from the millennial generation dominated with a portion of around 70% (Setiawan & Akhmad, 2023). Maharani & Rohim (2022) studied digital fundraising at BAZNAS DKI Jakarta, highlighting the optimization of digital channels such as websites and social media in increasing income zakat collection. Their focus was more on technology, not on the integration of IMC messages (Maharani & Rohim, 2022). Millah et al. (2024) examined the communication strategy of BAZNAS West Java in strengthening zakat literacy. This study emphasized the importance of public education and message consistency (Ani et al., 2024).

Aslam et al. (2025) analyzed the communication strategy of BAZNAS Palopo and found the effectiveness of social media and mosque collaboration in zakat collection. While this study demonstrated local IMC practices, it was regional in nature and did not address national brand image aspects. Saputra et al. (2025) highlighted BAZNAS's digitalization of zakat as part of community empowerment through technological innovation, but their focus was on digitalization, not cross-channel communication integration.

Thus, numerous studies have examined BAZNAS from the perspective of digital communication, digital perspectives, zakat literacy, and public relations strategies. However, most of these studies have not directly examined the relationship between IMC implementation and brand equity in zakat institutions. This is the main research gap and the basis for the importance of this study.

IMC began to develop in the 1980s, when companies began to realize the importance of combining various product promotion and marketing channels to optimize product sales. In this strategy, companies understand how all product promotion and marketing activities must be integrated into one voice, one vision, one behavior, and one strategy that not only conveys product promotions through media advertising, prices, discounts, packaging, etc., but also builds relationships with consumers directly to form a unique perception in the eyes of customers and results in purchases and becoming loyal customers (Kayode, 2014).

Definitions of IMC are numerous and varied, and there is no universal agreement on its definition. Kenneth Clow and Donald Baack, in their book, Integrated Advertising, Promotion, and Marketing Communications, define IMC as "the coordination and integration of all marketing communication tools, channels, and sources within a company into a seamless program designed to maximize the impact on customers and other stakeholders." This program encompasses all business-to-business communications, market channels, customer focus, and internal company communications (Clow & Baack, 2022).

Meanwhile, Kayode, in his book "Marketing Communication," defines IMC as a strategy for delivering all messages as a result of an overall plan. Formulated messages are delivered across all communication channels in an integrated manner to create the right position and generate the right action. Message delivery is synchronized to achieve synergy, ensuring there is no difference between the promotional and marketing channels used; everything consistently speaks with one voice (Kayode, 2014).

To support the implementation of an Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) strategy, various promotional and marketing channels can be utilized in an integrated manner to effectively convey brand communication messages to the public (Clow & Baack, 2022). One key channel is product advertising, which can be conducted through various media, including traditional media such as television, magazines, billboards, and printed brochures, as well as digital and social media, with advertisements placed in strategic locations to expand audience reach. Furthermore, sales promotions are also an important strategy, for example through discounts, easy refunds, coupons, bundling, trade incentives, and collaborative programs with sales partners.

Another equally important strategy is personal selling, where a salesperson's communication and persuasion skills are key to building strong relationships with customers and driving purchasing decisions. In the context of public relations, efforts are made to build a positive image and brand awareness in the public mind, thus giving a product or institution an advantage over similar competitors (Lim & Young, 2021).

Furthermore, digital marketing plays a central role in the modern era, utilizing various platforms such as microblogs, Google Ads, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, email marketing, and e-commerce channels tailored to target audiences (Khanom, 2023). Mobile marketing is also an effective tool for creating direct interactions with customers through platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube, particularly by engaging influencers to strengthen brand appeal.

On the other hand, content marketing emphasizes the creation of promotional materials that are not only visually appealing but also provide valuable knowledge to the audience, thereby maintaining long-term engagement (Joan Isibor et al., 2025). Finally, sponsorship strategies are also used to increase awareness and positive associations with the brand through support for various relevant public activities, such as sporting events, exhibitions, award ceremonies, and matches (Dolores et al., 2021). Through the integration of all these channels, IMC strategies are expected to build strong, credible, and sustainable brand equity in the minds of consumers.

In the context of philanthropic institutions like BAZNAS, the implementation of IMC has a special nuance. It focuses not only on sales or increasing market share but also on building a positive image as a trustworthy, transparent, and professional institution in managing community funds. The IMC approach to zakat must combine persuasive and educational marketing communication, for example, with content that emphasizes sharia obligations, the social impact of zakat, and testimonials from beneficiaries. Research by Cornelissen (2020) confirms that IMC in the nonprofit sector tends to emphasize emotional appeal and trust-building more than in the commercial sector (Schildt et al., 2020).

The perceptions, images, and values formed in the minds of consumers constitute brand equity. According to Kenneth Clow Donald Baack, brand equity is a set of unique brand characteristics and consumer perceptions that view the brand name of goods or services as different, better, and trustworthy. Furthermore, brand equity is the differential effect that arises from consumer knowledge of the brand name on their response to the product or its marketing (Clow & Baack, 2022).

Meanwhile, according to Philip T. Kotler, Gary Armstrong in the book *Principles of Marketing* defines brand equity as the differential effect that brand name recognition has on customer responses to products and their marketing, so that it can attract long-term consumer preferences and loyalty (Kotler et al., 2018). The existence of brand equity influences customer attitudes, if it has a positive value then customers will have a positive attitude, and if it has a negative value then customers will have a negative attitude.

According to David A. Aaker in his monumental work *Managing Brand Equity*, the concept of brand equity is understood as a collection of assets and liabilities attached to a brand, both in its name and symbol, which can add or reduce the value of a product or service for the company and customers (Aaker, 1991). In other words, the strength of a brand lies not only in its physical product, but also in the symbolic and emotional associations built in the minds of consumers. Aaker emphasized that for an asset or liability to be categorized as part of brand equity, the element must be directly related to the brand name or symbol. If there is a change in the brand name or symbol, then these assets and liabilities can be affected, even potentially lost, although some may still be transferred to the new identity created by the company.

Furthermore, Aaker formulated a brand equity model consisting of five main components that form the foundation of brand strength. First, brand association, which is everything that comes to mind when customers hear or see a brand, including the perceptions, emotions, and experiences that shape the brand's image. Second, brand loyalty, which indicates the level of customer attachment to a brand and their tendency to continue to make repeat purchases. Third, brand awareness, which is the ability of consumers to recognize and remember that a brand is part of a certain product category. Fourth, perceived quality, which is the customer's perception of the overall quality or superiority of a product or service compared to its competitors. Finally, proprietary assets, which include the brand's competitive advantages in the form of patents, intellectual property, and strategic partnerships that provide added value and differentiate the brand from other products in the market (Aaker, 1991). Thus, Aaker views brand equity as not merely a brand's image or popularity, but rather a strategic value system built through a combination of experiences, perceptions, and ongoing consumer loyalty.

In a recent study, Keller added a customer-based brand equity (CBBE) dimension relevant to the zakat sector (Keller, 2016). CBBE assesses brand strength from the perspective of zakat payers, encompassing brand awareness, positive associations, judgments, feelings, and resonance, reflecting emotional engagement and loyal behavior. Applying this model to BAZNAS allows for a more accurate measurement of how IMC influences zakat payers' decisions to formally pay zakat.

Brand equity is not formed automatically or naturally, but rather through an intense process of communication and interaction between the brand and its consumers. Consistent messaging disseminated through all company communication channels fosters a perception in consumers' minds about the uniqueness and superiority of the brand compared to similar brands. As research on Integrated marketing communications, brand equity, and business performance in micro-finance institutions: An emerging market perspective states that the IMC strategy implemented by companies is positively correlated and significantly influences the building of brand equity in the minds of consumers, where message consistency can help strengthen brand image, trust, and loyalty (Anabila, 2019).

In the context of NPOs, the use of IMC strategies to build brand equity is very common. This strategy is used by NPOs to establish a common language with their stakeholders and also to effectively achieve their targets or goals. Having a shared language or even a management style with their stakeholders makes it easier for NPOs to gain trust and support from them (Aboramadan et al., 2021). Stakeholders can understand that the support provided can have a significant impact.

This paper aims to examine the effectiveness of the Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) strategy implemented by BAZNAS in strengthening brand equity while increasing the participation of muzaki (recipients) in paying zakat through official zakat institutions, compared to zakat and social institutions that have not been formally registered (Juska, 2021). Through this research, it is hoped that a deeper understanding will be gained regarding how BAZNAS's integrated communication strategy contributes to the formation of positive brand awareness and image among the Muslim community.

More specifically, the objectives of this research encompass four main focuses. First, to analyze the implementation of BAZNAS's IMC strategy across various communication channels, both offline and online, to build brand awareness and a positive image of the institution among muzaki and prospective muzaki. Second, to identify the influence of IMC strategy on brand equity dimensions, such as brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, brand loyalty, and proprietary assets. Third, to explore factors that influence muzaki trust, both internal to the institution—such as performance, transparency, and service innovation—and external factors, such as media influence, the social environment, and zakat literacy levels. Fourth, to formulate strategic recommendations based on research findings to optimize BAZNAS's integrated communication strategy, with the aim of strengthening the institution's brand position and increasing zakat absorption through official channels.

By formulating this comprehensive objective, the research not only seeks to provide a general overview of the effectiveness of BAZNAS IMC, but also presents practical recommendations that can be the basis for policy making, developing innovative communication programs, and increasing the competitiveness of official zakat institutions amidst tight competition with private zakat institutions and informal zakat practices in the community.

METHOD

The research method used by the authors is a qualitative approach. A qualitative approach is a process of inquiry based on methodological traditions of inquiry that explore social or human problems. Researchers construct complex, holistic pictures, analyze words, report detailed views of informants, and conduct research in a natural setting (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The qualitative approach, also known as the subjective/interpretive approach, is a dual, complex, constructed reality, where humans are considered active, creative, and free-willed subjects. Human behavior is controlled by individuals and cannot be predicted, all aspects simultaneously influence each other. The relationship between researchers and research subjects is intimate and close, where reciprocal and long-term interactions arise. This approach examines specific things, hidden behavior, behavior that has historical significance, small/purposive samples. Qualitative approach analysis is inductive, seeking models/patterns (developing hypotheses that are bound by space and time), and is methodologically historical/phenomenological/interactional/critical. In this approach, the researcher's values, ethics, and

moral choices are inherent in the research process (Prof. Deddy Mulyana, M.A., Ph.D. Discussion at Paramadina University, March 21, 2007 Research Methodology).

This research is descriptive in nature, aiming to create a systematic, factual, and accurate description of the facts and characteristics of a specific population or object. Previously, this research formulated a conceptual definition that served as a guide for the researcher in conducting the research. In addition to being descriptive, it also uses an exploratory approach to enrich the research process. This type of research involves gathering information and understanding directly from the field, identifying issues or topics in the field.

The informants in this study were zakat administrators at BAZNAS. The sampling method used a non-probability sampling technique, which is the process of determining informants based on the researcher's judgment. Purposive sampling is the deliberate selection of informants, which is carried out by selecting potential informants based on specific criteria previously established by the researcher (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The main informants in this study were zakat managers who worked at BAZNAS Pusat. Informants were selected purposively based on the following criteria: (1) having at least three years of work experience at BAZNAS; (2) holding positions in communications, fundraising, or public relations; (3) being directly involved in the planning or implementation of communication campaigns such as "Cahaya Zakat," "Zmart," or "Zchicken."

Zakat managers were selected as informants because they possess a strategic understanding of the institution's communication policies, practical experience in implementing IMC, and access to the institution's internal data and evaluations. Therefore, interviews with them are expected to yield credible, in-depth, and relevant information to explain the relationship between communication strategy and BAZNAS brand equity development.

The data collection techniques used were in-depth interviews and document studies. In-depth interviews are a data collection process through a question-and-answer process or dialogue between the interviewer and the informant in order to obtain information about the informant's behavior, attitudes, and perceptions. The in-depth interview process is usually more exploratory and not limited by structure, usually with an interview guide that helps direct the interview process in accordance with the research objectives. In addition to in-depth interviews as the primary data source, this study also utilized secondary data obtained through documentation studies. Secondary data includes various sources such as the official BAZNAS performance report (2022–2025), publications on social media (Instagram, YouTube, Twitter/X), news articles, and BAZNAS digital campaign documents available online. These documents were used to strengthen the empirical findings and confirm BAZNAS's public communication narrative, particularly in the implementation of IMC strategies in the digital realm.

The use of primary and secondary data sources simultaneously is very useful in conducting triangulation based on sources, so that data and information from interview results can be directly confirmed and can be compared with data and information that has been published through various media such as the BAZNAS website and social media.

After the data is collected, the data is then analyzed through the process of organizing the data (collecting and grouping data), reading all the data, coding the data, compiling descriptions and themes from the coded data, reducing the data, presenting the data, and drawing conclusions from the results of the data analysis as input for compiling recommendations for improvement.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Brief Profile of BAZNAS

The National Zakat Agency or commonly referred to as BAZNAS is an institution or government agency that has the authority to manage zakat, infaq, and alms funds nationally. BAZNAS in carrying out its functions has a scope as mandated by Law No. 23 of 2011 concerning Zakat Management, namely planning, implementing, and controlling the collection, distribution, and utilization of zakat funds. BAZNAS in carrying out its functions is assisted by a network of Regional Zakat Agencies or BAZDA spread across 34 Provinces and 514 Regencies/Cities in Indonesia, as well as assisted by Zakat Agencies managed directly by the community as many as 36 National LAZs, 33 Provincial LAZs, and 60 Regency/City LAZs.

The National Zakat Agency (BAZNAS) is a non-structural government institution established under Law Number 23 of 2011, with the primary mandate to manage zakat, infaq, alms, and other religious social funds (ZIS-DSKL). As an institution that holds a major mandate in mobilizing the potential of national zakat, BAZNAS has a vision to become a strong, trusted, and modern zakat management institution, as well as being at the forefront of efforts to realize social justice and the welfare of the people through professional and integrity-based zakat management.

BAZNAS's mission is formulated comprehensively to support the achievement of this vision. First, BAZNAS is committed to building a strong, credible, and modern institution to carry out its zakat management function nationally. Second, it is to expand zakat literacy across all levels of society and increase the collection of ZIS-DSKL funds in a massive and measurable manner. Third, it is to optimize the distribution and utilization of zakat funds for poverty alleviation, improving the welfare of the community, and reducing social inequality.

Furthermore, BAZNAS is focused on continuously improving the competence, professionalism, and welfare of zakat collectors, as well as promoting the modernization and digitization of zakat management through the implementation of a robust and transparent data-based management system. Furthermore, BAZNAS is strengthening the planning, control, reporting, and accountability systems in zakat management to achieve accountable and integrated governance nationally.

Another mission emphasizes the importance of partnership between muzaki and mustahik in the spirit of mutual assistance on the path of goodness, as well as increasing synergy and collaboration with various stakeholders, both nationally and internationally. Finally, BAZNAS also aspires to play an active role and become a reference point for the global zakat movement, strengthening Indonesia's position as a center of innovation and inspiration in global zakat management (BAZNAS RI, 2024).

In managing zakat funds, BAZNAS adheres to the 3A principles, namely 1) Safe Syar'i, that in managing zakat it is based on and in harmony with sharia and must not conflict with Islamic law, the Qur'an, and Sunnah. 2) Safe Regulation that BAZNAS in managing zakat funds pays attention to and refers to applicable regulations and laws and legislation. 3) Safe NKRI is BAZNAS's commitment in managing and distributing zakat funds in order to strengthen brotherhood among the nation's children, distance themselves from various activities/acts of terrorism, in order to support the establishment of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) (Margono & Taris, 2025).

Based on the 2024 BAZNAS performance report, it shows that the number of muzaki/donors who pay zakat to BAZNAS is 3,824,983 people, this number has increased by 12.6% compared to 2023 (BAZNAS RI, 2024). Based on the results of the interview, it shows that in terms of number, muzaki are dominated by the millennial generation and generation Z compared to generation X. However, in nominal terms, the amount of funds collected is still dominated by generation X compared to the millennial generation and generation Z (Margono & Taris, 2025).

The collected funds from zakat and DSKL (Other Religious Social Funds) in 2024 amounted to Rp 1,129,667,972,716, this achievement increased by 123.3% compared to 2023. The most dominant source of collected funds came from zakat at 77.3% and followed by infaq/alms funds, DSKL, and CSR (BAZNAS RI, 2024). From the zakat and DSKL funds, BAZNAS managed to distribute the funds through various programs amounting to Rp 1,049,005,853,668, the distribution of these funds increased by 144.8% compared to 2023 with 4,333,178 beneficiaries and experienced an increase of 74.7% from 2023.

The distribution comes from zakat funds, followed by infaq/alms funds, CSR, and Religious Social Funds which are allocated for various program areas including humanitarian, health, education, economic, and da'wah-advocacy programs (BAZNAS RI, 2024). BAZNAS's flagship programs that are unique to BAZNAS compared to other zakat institutions are the Decent Housing program, Scholarships, BAZNAS Microfinance, BAZNAS Disaster Response, Zmart, Zchicken, Santripreneur, and BAZNAS Healthy House (Margono & Taris, 2025).

BAZNAS IMC Strategy

Based on the results of previous research and in-depth interviews with BAZNAS, that BAZNAS has implemented an IMC strategy in conducting promotions and marketing to muzaki and to the public to strengthen muzaki loyalty, increase awareness in the public, especially the millennial generation and generation Z as future muzaki, and improve reputation. How has the IMC strategy been implemented by BAZNAS in responding to the

challenges for BAZNAS, namely the large number of zakat and DSKL funds collected by unofficial institutions or those not affiliated with BAZNAS.

Based on the literature presented above, IMC, or integrated marketing communication, is the integration of all company communication channels for promotion and marketing to optimize product sales and strengthen brand awareness. In this integration, a crucial aspect is the umbrella message that forms a unified voice and strategy for promotion and marketing.

In this case, BAZNAS has formulated an umbrella message as a strategic message that serves as the spirit and framework for formulating various promotional messages at both national and regional levels. The umbrella message is "The Light of Zakat: The Miracle of Muzaki and Mustahiq", this strategic message is a symbol that zakat is not only beneficial for mustahik, but also provides blessings and peace for muzaki, this message is expected to be a spirit and a glimmer of hope through zakat can provide benefits for the independence of the people, become a source of happiness and optimism, and become a social glue to carry out social change (Margono & Taris, 2025). "Our approach isn't one of power. We don't force people to pay zakat, but rather raise awareness and sincerity. We showcase the benefits of zakat for both zakat payers and recipients, fostering a willingness to pay." (Taris, Kepala Bagian PPID BAZNAS RI, 17 September 2025).



Figure 1. BAZNAS Umbrella Message 2025

The umbrella message was not formulated just for 2025, but was revised annually, ensuring each year had a theme and spirit to increase zakat participation and benefits. The following is the transformation of BAZNAS' umbrella message from 2021 to 2025 (Media Indonesia, 2025):

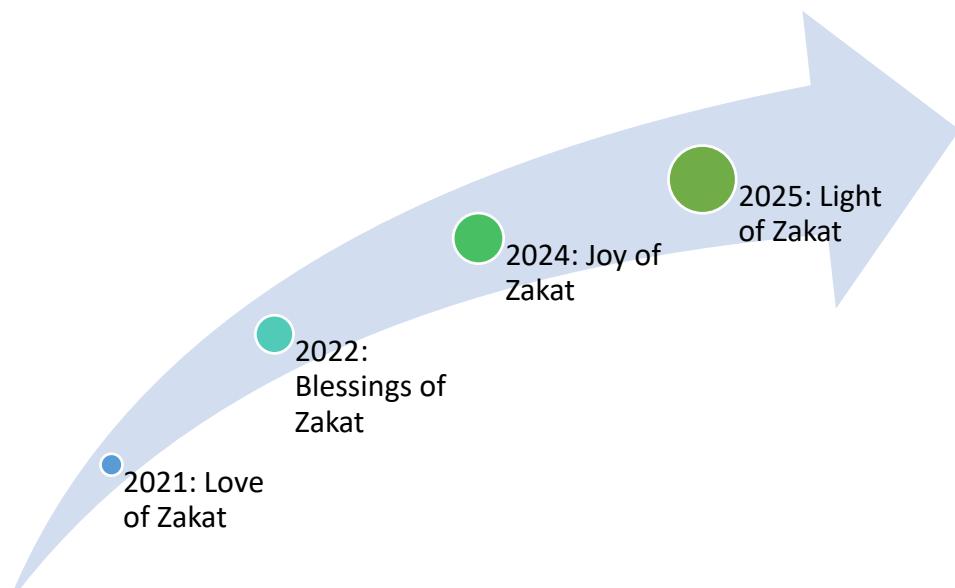


Figure 2. BAZNAS Umbrella Message Transformation 2021-2025

The promotional and marketing channels used to support the IMC strategy at BAZNAS consist of product advertising, face-to-face sales, public relations, mobile marketing, and content marketing:

1. Product advertising uses various media such as traditional media (TV, magazines, billboards, printed flyers, etc.), digital media, social media, and placing advertisements in various strategic places.

Product advertising is one of the IMC strategies used and optimized by BAZNAS to reach a wider audience, conveying promotional messages in the form of an invitation to pay zakat and/or to donate to various activities, such as Ramadan activities, Disaster Management, etc. One form of advertising carried out by BAZNAS is the installation of billboards in various strategic places, either paid or in collaboration with advertising providers with an advertising charity cooperation agreement in public spaces, when the billboards are empty and not in use. "We put up banners at strategic locations around payday, but we're also active on TikTok, Instagram, and WhatsApp. The principle is, as long as it doesn't conflict with the 3As—Safe Sharia, Safe Regulation, and Safe Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia—we optimize all channels." (Taris, Head of Department of PPID BAZNAS RI, 17 September 2025). Advertisements are usually placed at certain times, such as during Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr, before Eid al-Adha, to explain the payday period, etc. In addition to advertising on advertisements, BAZNAS also advertises on various modes of public transportation, such as KAI, Transjakarta, etc. as well as on Radio to support wider reach to reach more diverse audience segments.



Figure 3 BAZNAS Advertisements in Public Spaces

To increase advertising effectiveness, the company is not only placing ads in public spaces but also digitally, including on social media channels like WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok. It is also collaborating with e-commerce platforms like Shopee, Gopay, Dana, and OVO to facilitate information dissemination and facilitate zakat, infaq, and almsgiving transactions. "We collaborate with GoPay, Shopee, and other e-commerce platforms to make it easier for people to pay zakat. The principle is adaptive—as long as it complies with sharia, regulations, and the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, we'll participate." (Taris, Head of Department of PPID BAZNAS RI, 17 September 2025).



Figure 4 BAZNAS Advertisement on Social Media and E-Commerce

2. Face-to-face selling, or personal selling, utilizes the salesperson's personal skills and strong communication skills to build strong relationships and secure purchases from customers. Face-to-face selling is one of BAZNAS's strengths in the zakat payment process, educating zakat payers about zakat, and fostering emotional connection with them.

BAZNAS provides zakat counters and officers at every BAZNAS office at the national, provincial, and district/city levels. BAZNAS also has a zakat pick-up service, where BAZNAS can send zakat officers to Muzaki locations to handle the zakat payment process. To expand the reach of zakat officers to Muzaki, BAZNAS is opening UPZ (zakat collection unit) service collaborations with various parties such as Ministries, State-Owned Enterprises, State Institutions, and private or community organizations. Despite the rise of digital wallet payments, some zakat payers still pay zakat directly to zakat collectors through service counters or zakat collection points. The primary reason these zakat payers prefer direct zakat payments is the sense of reverence felt by the prayers offered by the collectors, rather than through banking apps or digital wallets.

3. Public relations aims to build a product's image in the public mind, thus enhancing brand awareness among customers compared to similar products. This approach to building relationships with both muzaki and mustahik is highly effective. The messages developed within these relationships emphasize the positive values of zakat, including its social and economic impact, independence, optimism, and sincerity.

The collected zakat, infaq, and alms are distributed to mustahik and beneficiaries and utilized in various forms of empowerment programs such as the BAZNAS Healthy Home program, BAZNAS decent housing, Scholarships, BAZNAS microfinance, BAZNAS Disaster Response, Zmart, Zchicken, and Santriprenuer. Through the programs implemented by BAZNAS, BAZNAS is getting closer to muzaki because the benefits of zakat paid can be useful, and closer to mustahik because mustahik gets access to empowerment programs and quality health services. Based on the quality of program services carried out by BAZNAS, BAZNAS was awarded as the best zakat institution and was able to maintain the TOP BRAND for 4 consecutive years from 2022 to 2025.

4. Mobile marketing that targets promotions through the process of interacting with customers directly to drive customer engagement and brand awareness through Tiktok, IG, YouTube by involving influencers.

Mobile marketing to target promotions through the interaction process with the audience, both muzaki and mustahik has been carried out by BAZNAS, one of which is by utilizing live streaming on Instagram and YouTube channels to increase awareness and education about zakat, finance, zakat policies, fundraising, health, Nabawi history, etc.

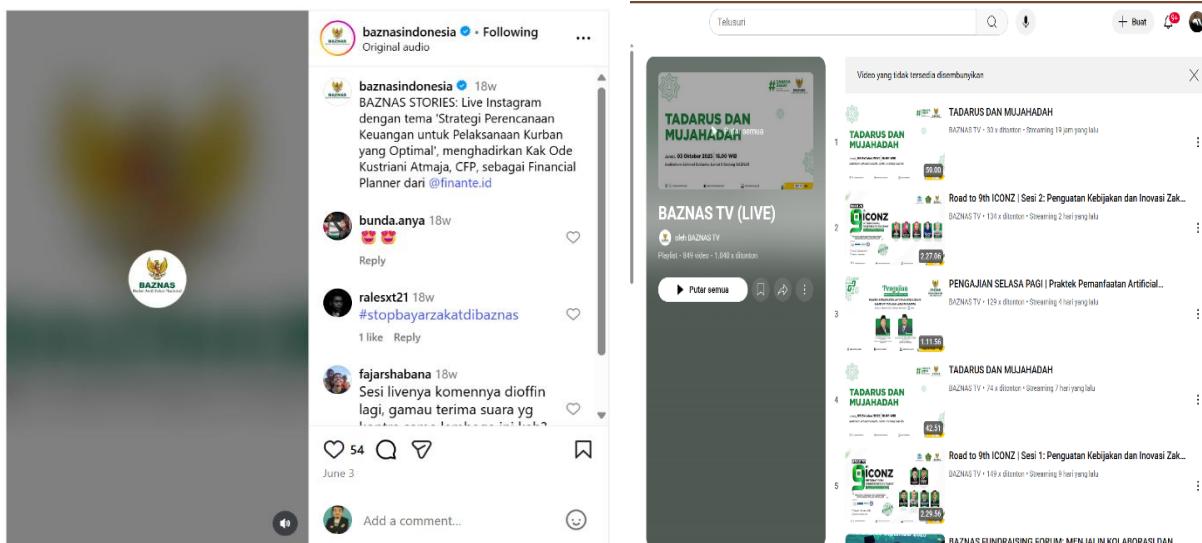


Figure 5. Mobile Marketing on IG and YouTube

In addition to live streaming, the involvement of influencers in increasing awareness and audience participation in zakat payments and support for BAZNAS programs has been carried out, one of which is collaborating with various artists such as Nabila Ayu Putri in the BAZNAS Sharing Program and Ivan Gunawan in the Strengthening Collaboration to Help Palestine program, as well as other artists such as Reza Artamevia, Rafi Ahmad etc. The involvement of influencers is very effective, especially in reaching Generation Z, Influencers can be heard more and can encourage audience involvement to jointly provide social assistance to various victims. "We often collaborate with influencers and other institutions, but our core value remains trust. Many zakat payers choose Baznas not only because it's a government institution, but also because of its fast service and personal prayers."(Budi Margono, Kepala Divisi Promosi BAZNAS RI, 17 September 2025).



Figure 6. BAZNAS Sharing Program: Nabila Ayu Helps Flood Victims in Pengadegan and BAZNAS and Ivan Gunawan Strengthen Collaboration to Help Palestine

5. Content marketing focuses on creating promotional content packed with knowledge to attract and retain an audience.

BAZNAS has packaged educational content on zakat, such as how to calculate zakat, how to pay zakat, education on sacrifice, and awareness campaigns such as aid for Palestine and disaster relief. These contents are published through BAZNAS' Instagram account. This educational content is marketed to increase knowledge and retain audiences. In this case, BAZNAS positions itself as a friend in understanding zakat and sharing with others to help each other.

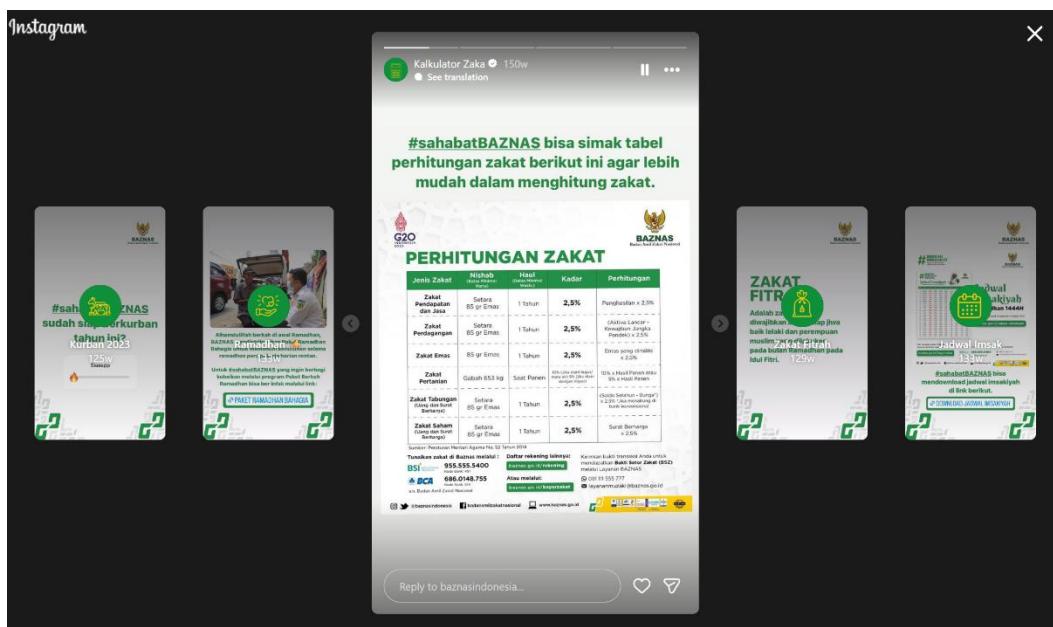


Figure 7 BAZNAS Educational Content

Brand Equity Baznas

Brand equity is crucial for a product or institution as a form of competitive advantage compared to similar products or institutions. Brand equity is the perception of consumers or the public that a product or service brand is different, better, unique, and trustworthy. Based on interviews, BAZNAS's brand equity is unique and differentiates it from other zakat institutions. One notable feature is that BAZNAS was awarded the TOP BRAND award for four consecutive years, from 2022 to 2025, among other zakat institutions. BAZNAS's advantages can be explained as follows:

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Resmi Digelar, Garuda Indonesia Umrah Festival 2025 Targetkan Penjualan 49 Ribu Kursi Penerbangan

Figure 8. BAZNAS achieved TOP BRAND 2025

1. Brand association, everything that is connected in the minds of customers about a product brand.

The BAZNAS brand association is formed through consistent messaging and symbols used across various communication channels. Through thematic narratives such as "Love Zakat" and "Light of Zakat," BAZNAS presents a religious image, full of blessings, and imbued with the values of faith. This overarching theme serves as an umbrella message that fosters emotional closeness between muzaki (zakat givers) and mustahik (zakat recipients), and emphasizes that zakat is not only a spiritual obligation but also an expression of love and social concern. Every BAZNAS program, such as Rumah Sehat BAZNAS, Kampung Zakat, Z-Mart, Z-Chicken, and the Stunting Eradication Program, utilizes a storytelling approach to demonstrate the tangible impact of zakat on improving the well-being of the community. Through success stories of beneficiaries, the public is invited to see how zakat can provide solutions to various social and economic challenges. "We don't portray images of sadness or poverty, but rather happy and optimistic recipients. We want the public to see that zakat brings happiness and life change." (Taris, Head of Department of PPID BAZNAS RI, 17 September 2025).

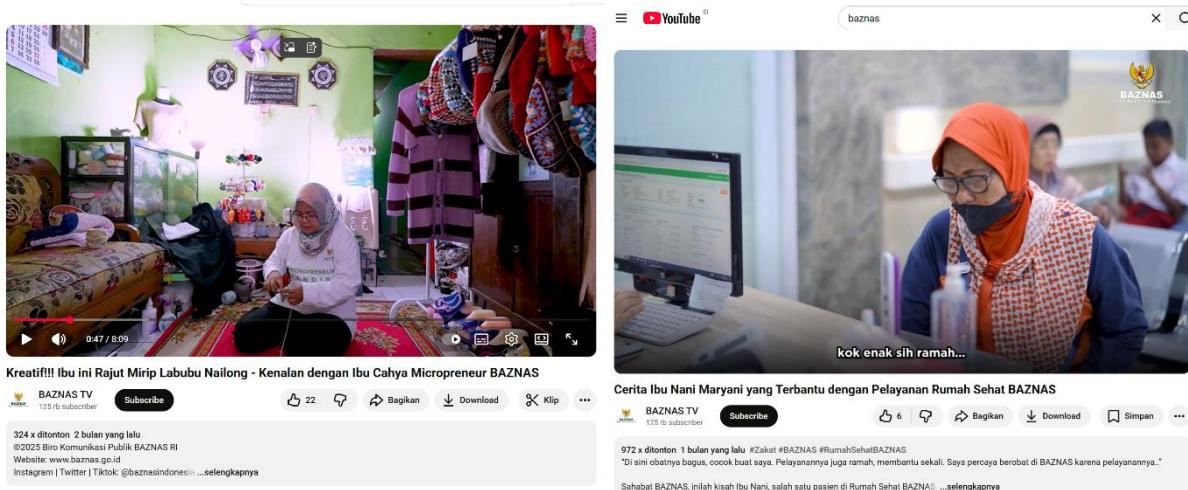


Figure 9 Example of Storytelling about a Creative Mother who develops knitted products as a BAZNAS micropreneur partner and a BAZNAS Healthy Home Beneficiary who feels comfortable

<p>Story 1: <i>Through business capital support from BAZNAS, Mrs. Cahya was able to transform her knitting skills into a product that could become a source of income</i></p>	<p>Story 2: <i>Through the Baznas Healthy Home program, Mrs. Nani was able to access health checks for her diabetes, and it was very helpful amidst her economic limitations, the excellent and friendly service made Mrs. Nani comfortable seeking treatment at the BAZNAS Healthy Home.</i></p>
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Through storytelling, marketing content is used to promote the benefits of zakat, increase the attention of BAZNAS audiences, and build emotional engagement. This is evidenced by the relatively high number of viewers compared to other videos. Trust in BAZNAS is strengthened through the implementation of the 3A Principles: Safe Sharia, Safe Regulation, and Safe Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. This principle serves as a key differentiation proposition, affirming that all zakat fund management at BAZNAS is carried out with integrity, in accordance with religious provisions, and in line with state law.

Furthermore, BAZNAS's legal standing as the official state zakat institution provides strong legitimacy and affirms its image as an authoritative and coordinating institution. This status strengthens public trust that paying zakat through BAZNAS means distributing it through a legitimate, professional institution oriented toward the nation's well-being. Thus, the BAZNAS brand association is embedded with the values of blessing, trust, legal legitimacy, and national social concern. All elements of its communications and activities synergize to build BAZNAS's image as a trusted zakat institution that delivers tangible benefits to the people and the nation.

However, there is a challenge: brand associations have not optimally encouraged zakat payers to official zakat institutions like BAZNAS, as the data above shows a gap between zakat potential and zakat receipts. There may be concerns among zakat payers about the impact of zakat payments on their communities, leading them to often pay zakat directly to mustahiq (recipients). Therefore, it is crucial to educate and expand collaborative networks with mosques as UPZ (Zoom-Based Zakat Institutions) to reach the smallest communities.

2. Brand loyalty, the extent to which customers are attached to a product brand

Interviews show that zakat payers' loyalty to BAZNAS stems not only from its status as an official state institution, but primarily from the quality of service and emotional closeness they build with zakat

payers. BAZNAS exists not merely as a zakat management institution, but as a spiritual friend who cares for and understands the needs of zakat payers.

Personal and warm service is key to maintaining the trust of zakat payers. Through dedicated prayers delivered face-to-face, by phone, or by video call, a convenient zakat collection service, and a quick response time of up to two minutes, BAZNAS demonstrates a true commitment to providing a sincere and memorable experience. "Many zakat payers feel connected because they are served directly and prayed for personally. This leads them to pay zakat repeatedly and recommend Baznas to others." (Taris, Head of Department of PPID BAZNAS RI, 17 September 2025).

Findings from a survey of zakat payers' satisfaction reinforce this: the primary reason they return to paying zakat through BAZNAS is not because of its government status, but rather because of its exceptional service. For zakat payers, the personal attention and sincere prayers foster a sense of appreciation, creating an emotional bond that strengthens the brand intimacy between the zakat payer and BAZNAS. Loyalty also grows through digital engagement, particularly among young zakat payers who are accustomed to paying small amounts of zakat through various online channels. While the amount may not be substantial, this habit indicates the potential for long-term loyalty rooted in easy access and a continuously nurtured emotional connection. Thus, it can be concluded that BAZNAS's brand loyalty stems not only from its formal institutional image, but also from its human touch, sincere spiritual service, and responsiveness that demonstrates genuine concern. BAZNAS not only manages zakat but also fosters spiritual intimacy between the institution and its zakat payers.

3. Brand awareness, the ability of consumers to recognize and remember that a brand is a member of a particular product category

BAZNAS's high level of brand awareness is no accident. This success is the result of implementing an integrated marketing communication strategy that maintains message consistency while expanding communication reach across multiple channels. Through this approach, every form of communication, from the central government to the regional governments, conveys the same message, building a strong and recognizable image. One key to its success is the use of an annual national theme, such as "Cahaya Zakat," which serves as a unified narrative across all media. This theme is not only present on television, radio, billboards, and print media, but is also creatively packaged on social media and amplified by influencers close to the community. In this way, the public learns about BAZNAS through a single, consistent, relevant, and memorable message. "We have a major annual theme like 'Cahaya Zakat.' All campaigns—digital, posters, and events—must have a unified narrative so the public understands the main message." (Budi Margono, Head of the Promotion Division of BAZNAS RI, September 17, 2025)

Furthermore, BAZNAS also leverages religious moments to strengthen its brand presence. Campaigns such as "Kurbanayakan Desa" and "Kurban Digital" are successful examples of how the message of zakat and qurban is packaged in a contemporary context. Each campaign is not only an invitation to pay zakat or qurban, but also a form of education and inspiration about the meaning of sharing, which has a broad impact on the community. Despite a limited budget for conventional media like banners and billboards, BAZNAS is able to offset this through a strategy of strengthening digital channels and social media. Through an omni-channel approach, BAZNAS's presence remains sustainable and reaches a cross-generational audience, from urban to rural communities. "We have a dedicated team that responds to digital zakat requests within 2–5 minutes. We use all channels, including WhatsApp, social media, and apps." (Budi Margono, Head of the Promotion Division of BAZNAS RI, September 17, 2025)

Another advantage lies in the BAZNAS branch network, which spans all provinces, regencies, and cities across Indonesia. This network plays a crucial role in ensuring that BAZNAS's message and identity are conveyed uniformly throughout the region, fostering a shared perception of the institution among local communities as at the national level. Thus, BAZNAS's brand awareness is built not only through large-scale campaigns, but also through a consistent narrative across channels, a strong national theme, and an extensive local communication network. This overall strategy fosters sustainable brand awareness, thereby strengthening BAZNAS's position as a trusted zakat institution within the community.

4. Perceived quality, customer perceptions formed regarding the overall quality or superiority of a product or service compared to its competitors

The perceived quality of BAZNAS is not only based on the tangible results of zakat distribution, but also on the credibility, transparency, and professionalism in every aspect of its service. For zakat payers, BAZNAS's quality is reflected in their experiences interacting with the institution—from the ease of paying zakat, the speed of response, to the assurance that the funds distributed actually reach those entitled to them. A fast feedback system and human interaction are key factors in fostering trust. Each zakat payer receives prayers directly from the zakat collector, receives automatic notifications after each transaction, and receives transparent distribution reports. This personal touch makes zakat payers feel valued and confident that their zakat is being managed responsibly.

The quality of BAZNAS is also evident in its flagship social programs, such as the BAZNAS Healthy Homes and Zakat Villages, which have had a tangible impact on improving community welfare. These programs not only demonstrate BAZNAS's managerial capabilities and accountability but also enhance the institution's image as a results-oriented and sustainable entity. From an institutional perspective, legality and government oversight have strengthened the public's perception of BAZNAS as a safe and trustworthy institution. The appointment of its leadership by the President of the Republic of Indonesia, along with the support of the Constitutional Court, reinforces BAZNAS's legal legitimacy and official status as a state zakat institution.

Furthermore, BAZNAS has successfully combined professionalism with modernity through integrated digital services. Through its zakat payment app, QRIS system, and easily accessible official website, BAZNAS offers an efficient, fast, and relevant zakat experience for today's digital society. Thus, BAZNAS's perceived quality is formed by a combination of professional service, tangible social impact, and strong legal legitimacy. BAZNAS is not only judged by its quality based on its results, but also by the trust that grows from transparency, innovation, and a human touch in every step of its service.

5. Proprietary assets, brand advantages in having patents, intellectual property, trade partnerships, etc. which form the superiority of a product brand compared to other similar products.

BAZNAS possesses a variety of brand assets that collectively strengthen its brand equity in the public eye. These assets are not only physical and institutional, but also encompass symbolic and emotional values that distinguish BAZNAS from other zakat institutions. One of its most valuable assets is its official state institutional status. BAZNAS is the only zakat collection institution established through a Presidential Decree and legally recognized by the Constitutional Court. This status serves as an exclusive proprietary asset—granting strong legitimacy, high public trust, and an authoritative position unattainable by other zakat institutions in Indonesia.

Operationally, BAZNAS has an internal digital system that integrates zakat data nationally. Although still under development, this system has become a strategic data asset that supports transparency, efficiency, and coordination between zakat institutions in various regions. With this system, BAZNAS demonstrates its commitment to modern, data-driven governance.

The institutional network, which extends from the central government to the district/city levels, serves as a crucial structural asset. This network ensures that BAZNAS's messages, programs, and services reach all levels of Indonesian society, strengthening its brand presence down to the grassroots. Equally important, BAZNAS also leverages annual thematic programs and national communication campaigns, such as "Cahaya Zakat," as intangible assets. These campaigns not only strengthen brand identity but also increase brand recall in the public mind through consistent and inspiring messaging across various communication channels.

Combining all these elements, it can be concluded that BAZNAS's proprietary assets include a unique legal status, strong communication channels, a national institutional network, internal digital systems, and a distinctive and consistent brand narrative. The synergy between these assets makes BAZNAS not just a zakat institution, but also a symbol of trust, professionalism, and blessings at the national level.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that the Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) strategy implemented by the National Zakat Agency (BAZNAS) has a very significant role in building and strengthening the institution's brand equity in the public eye, especially among muzaki, millennials, and generation Z. BAZNAS's integrated, consistent, and Islamic-based IMC approach has successfully synergized various forms of communication—from advertising, public relations, digital marketing, to face-to-face services—into a single, strong, relevant, and memorable message. Through the umbrella message "Cahaya Zakat: The Miracle of Muzaki and Mustahik," BAZNAS is able to change the public's perception of zakat, not just as a religious obligation, but as a social movement that brings blessings and prosperity to the people.

The religious, humanist, and inspirational narrative promoted by BAZNAS successfully projected the image of a modern, trustworthy, professional, and nationally oriented zakat institution. The study's findings indicate that the implementation of IMC not only increased public awareness and participation in paying zakat through official institutions but also strengthened the five main dimensions of brand equity as proposed by Aaker. First, BAZNAS's brand association is formed from the institution's religious image, blessings, and legal legitimacy. Through the principles of "Safe Sharia," "Safe Regulation," and "Safe Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia," BAZNAS instilled the perception that zakat distributed through official institutions is more valuable and has a social and spiritual impact. Second, brand loyalty grows thanks to a service approach that emphasizes emotional and spiritual closeness between amil and muzaki. Programs such as zakat collection, direct prayer, and personal communication create a warm relationship that makes muzaki feel valued and emotionally connected. This loyalty stems not only from BAZNAS's status as an official state institution, but also from the warm service and integrity of its amils. Third, brand awareness is strengthened through a consistent and ongoing national communications campaign. The "Light of Zakat" theme, used in an integrated manner across all communication channels, from conventional to digital media, makes BAZNAS's identity widely recognized across generations and regions. Fourth, BAZNAS's perceived quality is reflected in its professionalism, transparency, and the quality of its social programs, which are truly felt by the community, such as the BAZNAS Healthy Homes, the Cendekia Scholarship, Z-Mart, and BAZNAS Disaster Response. This quality is further supported by the digitalization of zakat, which facilitates fast and reliable transactions and distribution. Fifth, proprietary assets are a significant differentiating force—its legal status as a state institution established by Presidential Decree, its institutional network extending down to the district/city level, and its integrated national data system make BAZNAS a leader in the national zakat ecosystem.

BAZNAS's success in achieving the Top Brand title for four consecutive years (2022–2025) is clear evidence of the effectiveness of IMC, implemented consistently and sustainably. This strategy not only expands the participation of zakat payers but also fosters public trust and strengthens BAZNAS's image as a trusted zakat institution close to the community. Conceptually, IMC practices at BAZNAS demonstrate that communication within philanthropic institutions is not solely oriented toward increasing transactions, but also toward strengthening the values of faith, social solidarity, and trust in state religious institutions. This communication approach, which combines educational, spiritual, and modern digital elements, has proven capable of meeting the challenges of the disruptive era, where competition from informal zakat institutions and online donation platforms is increasingly fierce. Thus, BAZNAS's IMC strategy has been empirically proven effective in building strong and sustainable brand equity. The synergy between consistent messaging, diverse communication channels, humanistic service, and strong institutional support makes BAZNAS not just a zakat management institution, but a symbol of public trust and a role model in national social and religious fund management.

Ultimately, strengthening understanding of the umbrella message of "Cahaya Zakat" across all levels of the BAZNAS organization is key to brand sustainability. All elements of the institution, from leadership to field staff, need to have a unified understanding, a unified voice, and a unified meaning for the institution's core message. Furthermore, strengthening the network of Zakat Collection Units (UPZ) at the local level through collaboration with mosques, neighborhood associations (RTs), and other zakat institutions will expand service reach, strengthen data consolidation, and improve the quality of zakat services across the country. In this way, BAZNAS not only strengthens its brand and institutional reputation but also deepens the social impact of zakat as a tool for the nation's social and spiritual transformation.

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