

# Astro Talk in Social Media - Indonesia

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langitselatan, astronomy education and communication media

**Abstract.** Social media is a new trend in communicating and connecting to people. It is also a good choice to build awareness of astronomy as issues spread easily and quickly, creating hot topics. This paper will analyze the trend of astro talk in Indonesia and hope to inspire astronomers to use social media in raising awareness.

**Keywords.** astronomy, social media

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## 1. Astronomy and Social Media

Indonesia right now is witnessing a high adoption rate of social media where news and issues spread easily among public. As of August 2012, Indonesia has become the 4th largest Facebook user (Socialbakers, 2012) in the world and 5th largest on Twitter (Infographic Labs, 2012). Social media is a platform to communicate but also a tool to introduce astronomy. An astronomer would gain advantages from participating in social media, such as 1) simplifying ideas and give better understanding to the people; 2) giving the correct information and/or deal with misconception directly; 3) to show that science is doable; 4) share scientific result and build trust with the public. Indonesia has 19 clubs and 3 online media (astronomy related) and most of them active. Additionally, there are 5 astronomy Pages and 11 Groups on Facebook from Indonesia. On Twitter, there are 16 astro-tweeps whom actively tweet about their activities and provide basic information. Astronomy has become famous when there is an event such as a meteor shower, eclipses, Venus transit and near the beginning of Ramadhan to determine and decide the Islamic dates by observing the waxing crescent of the Moon. Statistics gathered by PeopleBrowsr in 2012 (PeopleBrowsr, 2012) show that for indonesia 1) Public curiosity is high, 2) People need facts from trusted source, 3) Social media provides a platform to bridge the ivory towers, 4) Social media can be used as collaboration tool between astronomers and amateurs, and 5) (public) Reach becomes unlimited.

Aside from peer reviewed journals and press releases, an astronomer can deliver their findings through social media to build public awareness and begin a conversation with the public. When astronomers talk, 1) Laymen know the forefront of science instantly, 2) feedback is unfiltered and in real time (compared to a newspaper article), 3) affording less miscommunication, 4) increased trust between the scientist and public, as well as closer scrutiny for tax funded projects. 5) public feels closer to the source. Having the astronomers or scientist talk directly with them will inspire the public to learn more about science.

AY would like to thank LKBF and IAU for the grants to attend the 28th IAU GA.

## References

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