Research Article / Araştırma Makalesi

THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE ON DESIGN OFFICES

SOSYAL MEDYA KULLANIMININ TASARIM OFİSLERİNE ETKİSİ

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Abstract
This study aims to elucidate the effects of Instagram usage on the design processes, client relations, project management, and corporate identity of Interior Design and Architecture offices. It seeks to provide a comprehensive perspective on how social media platforms induce transformations within design offices and the extent to which these changes are reflected in sectoral dynamics. In this context, the "cross-sectional research model," one of the general survey models, was chosen to test the hypotheses regarding the "operations" and "developments" of Interior Design and Architecture firms through Instagram usage. The study's population consists of Interior Architecture and Architecture offices operating in Istanbul, with the sample including 21 offices that actively use Instagram and have at least 30,000 followers. To efficiently gather data from the larger population, the "convenience sampling method," a type of random sampling, was employed. A 23-question survey form, developed by the researchers, was used in the study. The findings indicate that Instagram positively impacts the operations and development of design offices, supporting the study's hypotheses. However, the limited scope of the sample weakens the generalizability of the findings and negatively affects the external validity of the research. To address the issue of low external validity and ensure that the data obtained represents a broader audience, it is recommended that future research includes other popular social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest.

Keywords: Social Media, Instagram, Design Office, Interior Design, Architecture.

Öz
Bu araştırma, Instagram kullanımının İç Mimarlık ve Mimarlık ofislerinin tasarım süreçleri, müşteri ilişkileri, proje yönetimi ve kurumsal kimliği üzerindeki etkilerini ortaya koymayı, sosyal medya platformlarının tasarım ofislerinde nasıl bir dönüşüm yarattığına ve bu dönüşümün sektörel dinamiklere ne ölçüde yansıdığına dair kapsamlı bir bakış açısı sunmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu bağlamda; Instagram kullanımının, İç Mimarlık ve Mimarlık ofislerinin "işleyişleri" ve "gelişimleri" üzerinden kurulan hipotezler için genel tarama modellemelerinden biri olan "kesitsel tarama modeli" tercih edilmiştir. Araştırmanın evrenini, İstanbul'da faaliyet gösteren İç Mimarlık ve Mimarlık ofisleri; örneklemini ise Instagram'ı aktif olarak kullanan ve en az 30.000 takipçisi olan 21 ofis oluşturmaktadır. Ana kütleden hızlı ve verimli bir şekilde veri toplamak için rastlantısal örnekleme türlerinden "kolayda örnekleme yöntemi" tercih edilmiştir. Çalışmada, araştırmacılar tarafından geliştirilen 23 soruluk anket formu kullanılmıştır. Elde edilen bulgular; Instagram'ın tasarım ofislerinin işleyişlerini ve gelişimlerini olumlu yönde etkilediğini göstermektedir. Bu sonuçlar; araştırmanın hipotezlerini de desteklemiştir. Bununla birlikte, çalışma grubunun sınırlı bir alandan seçilmesi, bulguların genellenebilirliğini zayıflatmakta ve araştırmanın dış geçerliliğini olumsuz etkilemektedir. Bu bağlamda, düşük dış geçerlilik sorununu gidermek ve araştırmadan elde edilen verilerin daha geniş bir kitleyi temsil edebilmesini sağlamak için, Facebook, Twitter ve Pinterest gibi diğer popüler sosyal medya platformlarının da dahil edildiği yeni araştırmaların planlanması önerilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal Medya, Instagram, Tasarım Ofisi, İç Mimarlık, Mimarlık.

INTRODUCTION

The culture of consumption necessitates adapting to a constantly evolving world to sustain the system's continuity. As individuals' desires to be seen increase, they seek to establish their place in society by enhancing their communication skills. In this context, communication emerges as a fundamental factor that enables individuals to sustain their lives, strengthening the bonds between them through verbal, written, visual, and auditory resources. Among the most advanced communication technologies that have been significantly influenced by social transformations today is the internet. Initially developed by the U.S. Department of Defense in 1969 for research purposes (Leiner et al., 1997, p. 103), the internet has undergone various stages of evolution parallel to technological advancements, fundamentally altering the concept of communication. By the late 1980s, with the establishment of service providers, the internet began to be used by the masses. As its use became widespread, it transformed into a powerful mechanism for global interaction and information access. This digital communication technology, encompassing terms such as computer-mediated communication, information and communication technologies (ICT), new media, and social media, has led to a rapid digital transformation in both individual and public life (Parsa & Akçora As, 2021, p. 2391).

These advancements in digital communication have led to the emergence of a new media genre known as 'social media' (Uluç & Yarcı, 2017, p. 98). Social media platforms, inherently web-based, integrate various forms of media, information, and communication technologies, enabling users to create personal networks, engage in communication with others, display their connections, and construct profiles that showcase their identities (Fuchs, 2011, p. 141). In our current era, where virtual and online presence has become an essential part of everyday life, maintaining visibility on social media platforms is increasingly crucial. Individuals of all ages -ranging from children and young adults to the elderly- frequently use these platforms not only as spaces for identity construction and self-presentation but also as venues for sending messages, sharing visual and auditory content, and engaging in commentary (Parsa & Akçora As, 2021, p. 2392). Moreover, social media has had a significant impact on the design field, serving as both a communication tool and a source of opportunity. It enables designers to convey the underlying concepts and philosophies of their work through photographs and videos, helping audiences to better understand and appreciate these designs. This function of social media enhances the connection between designers and viewers, facilitating the exchange of ideas on a global scale. By enabling designers to transcend geographic boundaries, share their work with a broader audience, and engage in creative dialogues, social media has become an invaluable platform for the dissemination of design ideas, the cultivation of professional networks, and the exploration of innovative approaches to design communication, underscoring the profound impact of these digital communication technologies on both individual and collective aspects of social and professional life, particularly within the design community (Mutha, 2022).

Human psychology and behavior often evolve in response to the characteristics of the era. In our current age, the widespread use of smartphones has significantly increased internet usage, transforming social media platforms into virtual, timeless, and placeless spaces where people spend a substantial portion of their time. The French philosopher Debord coined the term "society of the spectacle" to describe societies where images dominate and everything is evaluated through visuals. In such a society, where the boundaries between reality and image are increasingly blurred, the spectacle has extended its presence from traditional media into social media, further solidifying its influence (2012, p. 13). As technology has advanced, the internet, along with social media, has emerged as a powerful force, contributing to the evolution of surveillance practices from their historical forms. The spectacle, which had established its presence in traditional media, has not been excluded from new media, particularly social media, which has become a key environment where the spectacle manifests and exerts its influence (Aydın, 2020, p. 2584). The society of the spectacle, woven from images and primarily characterized by entertainment, has continued its existence in traditional media while becoming even stronger and more impactful through social media. As Debord noted, in a society where "what is seen is good," many people remain unaware that they are subjugated to the systems of information and marketing (Aydın, 2020, p. 2590).

With the deep integration of social media into human life, there have been noticeable shifts in behaviors and thought patterns. Changes have emerged not only in lifestyle, entertainment methods, and leisure activities but also in work habits and design practices (Gürdağ et al., 2018). This development has led to the incorporation of collaborative practices into the field of architecture. Particularly over the last decade, new-generation architects have opened up architectural and design knowledge for public discussion, transforming the collective possibilities of architecture into a public method through social media (Tan, 2017, p. 24). The most significant contribution of digital social media is its ability to provide an egalitarian platform that, unlike traditional print media, circulates cultural production from all corners of the world. In this context, it is observed that many architecture firms, as well as architectural portals, collaborate with social media networks (Dündar Boyacıoğlu et al., 2015). The synchronization of architecture and social media creates various opportunities through platforms like Instagram (Mutha, 2022).

Social media has also become a crucial platform for brand and corporate marketing. As Solomon and Peter (2016, p. 318) note, social media is becoming mainstream in firms' marketing strategies. One of the primary reasons for firms' growing interest in social media is its ability to efficiently deliver large volumes of content to consumers (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 63). Social media also offers various advantages to consumers, one of which is the ease with which existing products and services can be categorized and classified. While there is extensive research on the role of social media in consumer and brand loyalty, there is still limited focus on how social media influences the promotion of professions within the service sector (Izadpanah & Gunce, 2021, p. 548).

Interior design is a profession centered on service provision, and marketing this service to the public has always been a challenging task. Anderson et al. (2007, p. v) assert that this profession remains incomplete without considering its social impact. Consistent with this perspective, social media emerges as a valuable tool that facilitates interior designers' connections with the public while enhancing the social impact of their profession. In this capacity, social media has effectively dismantled the barriers between designers, manufacturers, and clients/consumers, allowing for a more direct and engaged interaction. Consequently, designers perceive social media as an open door to potential clients, offering a platform that bridges the gap between design professionals and the broader market (Izadpanah & Gunce, 2021, p. 549).

Interior design is fundamentally a social profession, requiring designers to gain insights into their clients while also enabling others to understand their design concepts. In this context, a designer's social media profile becomes a critical platform (Knackstedt, 2013, p. 141). Statistics show that the vast majority of interior designers have established a presence on social media. According to a 2018 article by Danziger, nearly 80% of professional interior designers actively use social media. This platform serves not only as a space for designers to showcase their work but also as a medium for interaction within the industry, connecting designers with clients, peers, and other stakeholders. Additionally, manufacturers of interior design materials, as well as interior design-related magazines, websites, and blogs, play a significant role in shaping the interior design community on social media. These entities contribute to a vibrant online ecosystem that facilitates the exchange of ideas, trends, and innovations, thereby playing a crucial role in the ongoing evolution of the interior design profession.

There are numerous popular social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, Tumblr, Flickr, Reddit, and Snapchat, among others (Akram & Kumar, 2017, p. 348-349). In this regard, the 'Digital 2023: Global Overview Report,' prepared through a partnership between Meltwater and We Are Social, presents particularly compelling data. This comprehensive report on internet and social media usage behaviors provides crucial insights into the latest trends, offering a wealth of information necessary for understanding how these platforms shape user behavior globally. Such insights are particularly valuable for professionals in fields like architecture, planning, and design, where staying informed about digital trends can enhance the effectiveness of communication, marketing, and engagement strategies within a rapidly evolving digital landscape.

According to the global data presented in the report, there are 5.16 billion internet users worldwide, while 4.76 billion individuals use social media. The report highlights that 64.4% of the global population is

online and has identified a 1.9% increase in global internet usage and a 3% rise in active social media users over the past 12 months. Moreover, the research shows that a typical working-age internet user spends over 2.5 hours daily on social platforms, which means that approximately 4 out of every 10 minutes spent online is dedicated to social media activities (Kemp, 2023a).

In the specific context of Turkey, the report indicates that there are 71.38 million internet users and 62.55 million social media users. Notably, the time spent online and on social media in Turkey surpasses the global average: Internet users in Turkey spend an average of 7 hours and 24 minutes online daily, with 2 hours and 44 minutes of this time dedicated to social media usage (Kemp, 2023b). Furthermore, the report reveals that Facebook is the most popular social media platform globally in terms of active users, followed by YouTube, WhatsApp, and Instagram, which ranks fourth (Kemp, 2023a). However, in Turkey, YouTube is the leading platform, with Instagram ranking second in terms of active users. Additionally, Turkish users spend an average of over 21 hours per month on Instagram, making it the most time-consuming social media platform in the country (Kemp, 2023b). A related study by Global Web Index (GWI) further underscores Turkey's significant engagement with Instagram, revealing that with an 84% user rate, Turkey ranks first among forty-five countries for Instagram usage (2020, p. 17).

The reports, based on extensive surveys conducted across different countries and age groups, reveal a significant increase in internet access rates, the number of active social media users, and the time spent on these platforms, both globally and in Turkey. This upward trend is largely attributed to the global COVID-19 pandemic, which led to rapid and profound changes in daily life practices worldwide. The restrictions on social activities and the increased time spent at home resulted in a notable rise in online activity, making social media the primary means of communication and social interaction for many people across the globe. The statistics provided offer a general overview of the state of social media in the world and Turkey. However, to fully understand how digital trends and behaviors are evolving, a more in-depth analysis of the data is necessary, which would offer valuable insights into the long-term impacts of these trends on various aspects of life, including their influence on fields such as architecture, planning, and design.

Conversely, social media platforms have markedly altered the manner in which consumers engage with a multitude of industries, including that of architecture, in recent years. The capacity of social media to instantaneously disseminate images to a global audience has had a profound impact on architectural design and the public's perception of architectural works. Instagram, in particular, with its prioritisation of visual content, has provided architects and interior designers with unprecedented opportunities to showcase their work to a broader audience. This platform has revolutionised both the design process and the way the public engages with architecture (Mwewa, n.d.).

Given its visual-centric nature, Instagram has become an indispensable tool for professionals in the fields of architecture and interior design, enabling them to effectively showcase their projects and reach wider audiences. The platform's capacity to disseminate high-resolution visuals empowers designers to elucidate their aesthetic visions and projects with remarkable clarity and impact (Elveren, 2024). Furthermore, Instagram has played a pivotal role in the democratisation of access to design content. Designers are no longer dependent on conventional media outlets or trade journals to showcase their work on an international scale. This democratisation has facilitated broader and more accessible access to design knowledge for non-specialist audiences, thereby increasing public awareness and appreciation of the field of architecture (Mwewa, n.d.). By bridging the gap between professionals and the public, Instagram has not only transformed the dissemination of architectural content but also redefined the boundaries of engagement and interaction within the discipline.

Similarly, studies on the impact of social media on the shaping of interior spaces examine how these platforms transform users' perceptions of spaces and influence the emergence of new design trends (Yılmaz, 2022). Previously, designers concentrated on the emotional impact of spaces through their atmospheric qualities, such as lighting, texture, and spatial flow, with minimal consideration given to their visual appeal. However, with the advent of Instagram, there has been a notable shift in priorities, giving rise to the concept of Instagram-centric design, often referred to as *Instagrammable*, where visual

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aesthetics and social media shareability take precedence over traditional design elements (Syed, 2017). In their examination of Instagram's considerable impact on the perception of architectural spaces and interactions with them in the digital age, Wagiri et al. (2024, p. 949) emphasise the platform's emphasis on visual appeal while minimising the temporal and multisensory dimensions of architecture to mere snapshot moments. This dominance of visual appeal frequently eclipses the depth and richness of the architectural experience, fostering a superficial engagement driven by the pursuit of content that can be shared on Instagram. However, beyond this surface-level interaction, Instagram also presents opportunities for deeper engagement with architecture. By enabling users to reengage with architectural spaces across different times and contexts, it extends temporal experiences and transforms designs into dynamic, evolving narratives that seamlessly integrate past, present, and future. Through Instagram, architectural creations are no longer static objects but become integral components of a broader cultural landscape, capable of being reinterpreted and reshaped by users, thereby redefining their meaning and relevance in contemporary society.

In light of the balance observed in the literature, it is evident that the permeation of digital technology into every aspect of our daily lives has resulted in a profound transformation of our perceptions of architectural spaces and our interactions with them. Social media platforms, particularly Instagram, have emerged as powerful mediators between individuals and the built environment, with the capacity to reshape not only spatial perceptions but also the temporal interactions associated with architecture.

The platform has become an effective tool for visual storytelling and social interaction, featuring a visually driven interface with functionalities such as filters, hashtags, geotagging, and stories (Hu et al., 2014). Instagram not only redefines the ways in which architecture is presented but also transforms how users experience, interpret, and contextualise architectural spaces across different times and places (Thömmes & Hübner, 2018). Consequently, this interconnected relationship that Instagram establishes with the fields of architecture and interior design serves as a key motivation for conducting this research through the lens of this influential platform, which continues to shape and redefine the boundaries of design discourse in the digital era.

Problem
In the contemporary era, social media platforms have profoundly transformed the manner in which individuals and businesses access information, communicate, and engage in marketing activities. The advent of digital transformation has also impacted the design industry, with social media platforms assuming a pivotal role in the promotion of architectural and design projects, client relations management, and intra-sector interactions. In this context, social media has enabled design offices to reach a wider audience, both locally and globally, while simultaneously introducing novel business practices. However, the impact of social media usage on the corporate identity, project processes and client relations of these offices has yet to be sufficiently examined. In this context, an investigation into the positive and negative effects of social media use on design offices is of significant importance for the purpose of inferring the impact of social media strategies employed by these offices and the compatibility of these strategies with corporate operations.

Purpose
This study aims to elucidate the impact of social media (Instagram) usage on the design processes, client relations, project management, and corporate identity of design (interior design and architecture) offices, providing a comprehensive perspective on how social media platforms engender transformation in design offices and the extent to which this transformation is reflected in sectoral dynamics.

Hypothesis
This study aimed to test the following two research hypothesis (RH1 and RH2) related to the identified problem:

RH1: The usege of social media has an impact on the operations of design offices.

RH2: The usage of social media has an impact on the development of design offices.

Importance
This research discusses the experimental environment established by social media for the disciplines of design through design offices. In this context, the study traces the use of Instagram in interior design and architecture offices, predicts the interaction between social media and disciplines of design, and synthesizes a significant amount of information within the research parameters.

Limitations
The study discusses limitations in terms of theoretical and methodological aspects, as well as the internal and external validity of the research. Although a comprehensive literature review was conducted on the research topic, the limited number of scientific studies that aim to establish a dialogue between social media and design office is considered a theoretical limitation of this research. On the other hand, it is possible that the development and operations of the design offices may be influenced by factors beyond the scope of the research. The study assessed the impact of factors that were controllable or known within the methodological limitations. However, conducting the study in a natural environment made it difficult to control for variables and weakened the internal validity of the study. Additionally, the data were collected from a limited number of participants, which restricts the generalizability of the findings. The study's external validity was negatively impacted by the limited sample size.

METHODOLOGY
For this study, which involves collecting quantitative data from participants, we obtained Ethics Committee Approval numbered E-56365223-050.04-2024.137548.32 at the meeting of Istanbul Gedik University Ethics Committee Commission on 24 January 2024 (2024/1). Additionally, we informed all participants about the study's purpose and scope, how we would use the data, and how we would protect confidentiality. We provided participants with a Voluntary Information Form to read and sign the Consent Form.

Model
Within the scope of the study, the quantitative research method was preferred, and the cross-sectional research model was used. The purpose of this model is to provide a description of the current situation related to the research topic (Büyüköztürk et al., 2014). Cross-sectional research, as defined by Karasar (2019), is conducted to describe the current situation at a specific point in time.

Sample
The research population comprises Interior Design and Architecture offices operating in Istanbul. The sample consists of 21 design offices that actively use Instagram and have at least 30,000 followers. In order to collect data from the main population in an efficient and cost-effective way, we decided to use convenience sampling, which is a type of random sampling.

Data Collection Tools
The study employed a questionnaire developed by the researchers, consisting of two sections with a total of 23 questions. The initial section of the questionnaire focuses on fundamental data regarding Instagram utilization and comprises eight questions. The subsequent sections each contain five questions, utilizing a five-point Likert scale (strongly disagree: 1 ... strongly agree: 5) to assess perceptions related to 'account development,' 'contribution to the project process,' and 'general perspective.' The questionnaire, which could be completed in approximately ten minutes, was administered online via Google Forms, with no time limit imposed.

Data Analysis
The data collected within the scope of the research were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods. In this context, frequency analysis was conducted for the responses to the eight questions in the first section of the 23-question survey administered to participants. For the responses to the fifteen questions in the second section of the survey, percentage and arithmetic mean analyses were performed. The data obtained were analyzed using the SPSS 25.0 software package. This approach allowed for a detailed examination of the data, facilitating a nuanced interpretation of the participants' responses in the context of the research objectives.

FINDINGS

The frequency of responses given to the eight questions posed in the first section of the questionnaire were analyzed (Table 1). According to the data obtained, the majority of offices manage their social media accounts through a professional social media representative, indicating a serious and strategic approach in this area. Instagram emerges as the primary platform preferred by all offices, reaffirming its central role within the industry. Additionally, it is observed that other platforms such as YouTube and LinkedIn also find significant use. In this context, it can be stated that these offices are striving to maintain an active presence across various digital channels.

The data reveals that the majority of offices have been using Instagram for over four years, underscoring the platform's deeply established presence within the design industry. This long-term usage highlights Instagram's significance as a vital tool for maintaining visibility and engagement in a competitive field. Furthermore, follower counts for these offices tend to cluster within the 30,000-40,000 range, although there are several offices that have successfully amassed even larger followings. The presence of such high follower numbers indicates that these offices have cultivated a broad and active network of engagement, which in turn suggests that their social media strategies are being effectively implemented.

It has been observed that the most preferred type of sharing on Instagram is the Story format, while the type that generates the most interaction is Reels. This suggests that design offices strategically employ different sharing formats on Instagram for various purposes. The Story format, in particular, allows design offices to share content quickly and efficiently. The preference for this format likely stems from the desire of these offices to maintain continuous communication with their followers. Since Stories disappear within 24 hours, they are ideal for temporary and timely content, making them particularly suited for sharing site visits or internal office activities promptly. The strategic use of Stories can thus be understood as a reflection of the offices' need to keep their audience updated with the most current developments in a fast-paced and accessible manner. On the other hand, the fact that the Reels format receives the highest interaction highlights that followers are particularly drawn to more dynamic and creative content. Reels allow for the creation of short and impactful videos, making them an especially effective tool for capturing viewers' attention. The high engagement generated by Reels demonstrates their potential in enabling design offices to present their creative processes, 3D visualizations, and project progress in a visually compelling manner. The difference in preference and interaction between these two content formats suggests that design offices are diversifying their Instagram strategies and are actively working to engage their followers through a broad spectrum of content types. By utilizing both rapid and immediate posts to stay current, and Reels to create deeper, longer-lasting interactions, these offices are capitalizing on Instagram's multifaceted capabilities. This underscores how versatile a tool Instagram can be for design offices, and how, when used strategically, it can be highly effective in achieving a range of communication and engagement objectives.

The content that garners the most interaction includes, in order, 3D visualization images, instant posts featuring construction site or office content, and before-and-after space visuals. These findings indicate that 3D visualizations are the most engaging type of content for followers. 3D visualizations effectively present the potential of design projects in a visually striking manner, offering viewers a clear and compelling glimpse of the final outcome. This strong visual impact likely contributes to their high engagement rates, as they allow followers to vividly imagine the completed projects.

Instant posts, which provide real-time updates on the progress of projects and offer a direct view of office and/or construction site environments, also receive significant interaction. This type of content allows followers to observe the project development process firsthand, which can generate curiosity and foster a sense of connection with the ongoing work. The immediacy and authenticity of these posts are likely to resonate with followers, thereby enhancing their engagement.

Finally, before-and-after space visuals, which enable followers to visually track the transformation of a space, are inherently appealing. The dramatic contrast between the initial and final states of a space is particularly effective in capturing the attention of followers, leading to increased interaction rates. This type of content taps into the natural human interest in transformation and progress, offering a narrative

of improvement that strongly resonates with viewers.

Table 1. Frequency analysis of data on Instagram usage

Do you have a social media representative in your office?	%	N
Yes	81.0	17
No	19.0	4
Which social media platforms do you use?	**%**	**N**
Instagram	100	21
Youtube	57.1	12
LinkedIn	52.4	11
Twitter	28.6	6
Facebook	28.6	6
Tiktok	9.5	2
How many years have you been using Instagram?	**%**	**N**
0-1	---	---
2-3	14.3	3
4-9	81.0	17
10+	4.80	1
What is your current follower count?	**%**	**N**
30.000-40.000	47.6	10
40.000-50.000	14.3	3
50.000-60.000	23.8	5
60.000+	14.3	3
How many accounts do you access on average per month?	**%**	**N**
10.000-50.000	47.6	10
50.000-90.000	28.6	6
90.000+	23.8	5
What is your most preferred type of sharing?	**%**	**N**
Post	23.8	5
Story	52.4	11
Reels	23.8	5
Which type of post do you get the most interaction?	**%**	**N**
Post	19.0	4
Story	23.8	5
Reels	57.1	12
What is the content of the post you receive the most interaction?	**%**	**N**
3D visualization images	52.4	11
Daily informative posts	4.8	1
Instant posts (construction site/office content)	23.8	5
Customer satisfaction videos/images	4.8	1
Before-and-after space visuals	14.3	3

The data collectively suggest that content types that are visually compelling and provide direct information about projects tend to elicit greater engagement in the Instagram strategies of Interior Design and Architecture offices. The strategic emphasis on 3D visualisation images and instant posts (construction site/office content) has been identified as an effective approach to capturing the attention of followers and increasing interaction. These content forms allow offices to showcase their work in a way that is both

aesthetically appealing and informative, which resonates well with their audience.

The arithmetic means of the responses to the five questions in the second section of the questionnaire were analyzed (Table 2). Based on the data obtained from the first factor (F1), which includes five questions (01-05) related to account development, it is evident that Interior Design and Architecture offices regularly share posts to increase their visibility, utilize in-app advertising tools, and collaborate with professional designers. However, it is also possible to observe that these offices do not sufficiently prefer external advertising tools such as Google Ads and do not engage enough with other accounts to improve their visibility.

Based on the data obtained from the second factor (F2), which includes five questions (06-10) examining the contribution of Instagram to design processes, it is inferred that Interior Design and Architecture offices utilize Instagram in the concept development stages, material procurement processes, and implementation solutions. However, it can be said that they do not sufficiently prefer Instagram for sharing their designs with followers, actively seeking feedback, or informing their clients about projects. In light of these findings, the first research hypothesis, which suggests that social media usage impacts the operations of design offices, is supported.

Based on the data obtained from the third factor (F3), which includes five questions (11-15) examining general perspectives on Instagram, it is observed that Interior Design and Architecture offices believe that Instagram plays an important role in the design sector, is necessary for strengthening corporate identity, and helps protect intellectual and industrial property rights. Additionally, it can be said that they follow the Instagram accounts of other design offices. However, it is also observed that the majority of the work they receive is not sourced from Instagram. In light of these findings, the second research hypothesis, which suggests that social media usage impacts the development of design offices, is supported.

Table 2. Arithmetic mean analyses of data on Instagram perception

F	No.	Questions	(σ)	($\bar{x}$)
	01	We regularly post to enhance the visibility of our social media account.	0.84	4.29
	02	We use advertising tools to enhance the visibility of our social media account.	0.48	4.33
F1	03	We collaborate with professional designers to improve our account.	1.00	4.00
	04	We use advertising tools such as Google etc. to improve our account.	1.09	3.90
	05	We interact with other accounts to improve our account.	1.17	3.52
	06	We use Instagram in the design and concept creation process.	1.17	3.81
	07	We use Instagram to source the materials we use in our projects.	1.33	3.81
F2	08	We use Instagram for implementation solutions in our projects.	1.33	3.52
	09	We share our designs with our followers and actively seek their feedback.	1.31	2.71
	10	We use Instagram to keep employers informed about our projects.	1.35	2.86
	11	Instagram plays a crucial role in the design sector.	0.68	4.48
	12	We care to follow the Instagram accounts of other design offices.	0.86	4.05
F3	13	Instagram is essential for strengthening the corporate identity of design offices.	0.59	4.62
	14	Instagram posts protect intellectual and industrial property rights.	0.68	4.48
	15	The majority of the work received is sourced from Instagram.	1.47	3.52

*The table shows standard deviation values with the symbol (σ), while mean values are represented by the symbol ($\bar{x}$).

These analyses demonstrate that Instagram is an important tool for Interior Design and Architecture offices and is effectively utilized in various areas such as account development, design processes, and corporate identity. However, it is observed that some of the platform's potential benefits are not being fully realized, particularly the use of external advertising tools like Google Ads and the collection of feedback from followers. Therefore, it is necessary to approach social media strategies more comprehensively and to fully leverage all the opportunities that Instagram offers. This would contribute to strengthening the position of design offices in the industry as well as enhancing their operational efficiency.

CONCLUSION

This research has thoroughly examined the impact of the social media platform Instagram on the design processes, client relations, project management, and corporate identity of interior design and architecture offices. In this context, the study aimed to comprehensively evaluate how social media platforms have driven transformation within design offices and how this transformation is reflected in sectoral dynamics. The study analyzed how Instagram usage is integrated into the operational processes of design offices and how this integration contributes to their overall performance and competitive strength within the industry. The findings indicate that social media platforms serve as critical tools in the functioning of design offices, offering significant insights in this regard.

Instagram has become a pivotal tool for design offices aiming to enhance their brand visibility and fortify their digital marketing strategies. The tendency of these offices to employ advertising tools to increase the visibility of their social media accounts underscores the significant role this platform plays within the digital marketing ecosystem. Furthermore, the role of Instagram in reinforcing corporate identity is supported by the data gathered in this study. Consequently, it can be asserted that design offices do not merely use Instagram as a platform to showcase their projects but also as a strategic tool to solidify their corporate identity and fortify their standing within the industry. This dual-purpose approach highlights the multifaceted value of Instagram, both as a marketing vehicle and as an essential component in maintaining a cohesive and recognizable brand image within a competitive market.

However, it has been observed that there are certain limitations regarding the direct integration of Instagram into the design and implementation processes. Specifically, Instagram appears to be less effective as a tool for gathering feedback from followers. This suggests that design offices tend to use Instagram more as a showcase for their work rather than as an interactive platform for engaging with user feedback. This inclination indicates that while Instagram is leveraged for its visual and promotional capabilities, its potential for fostering meaningful interactions and obtaining valuable insights from users is not being fully utilized. Consequently, it is evident that design offices may not be capitalizing on the full interactive potential of Instagram, pointing to the need for strategies that better harness this aspect of the platform.

Although the hypotheses established within this quantitative study were tested exclusively on Interior Design and Architecture offices that actively use Instagram, the findings provide insights into the intricate relationship between social media platforms and design offices. However, one of the most significant methodological limitations of this research is that it was restricted to accounts with at least 30,000 followers and that the quantitative data were collected from only 21 Interior Design and Architecture offices. The selection of the study group from such a limited scope weakens the generalizability of the findings and negatively impacts the external validity of the research. In this context, to address the issue of low external validity and to ensure that the data obtained from the research can represent the broader population, it is recommended that future studies explore how other popular social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest, can be more effectively integrated into design processes. These studies could help identify the unique advantages and limitations offered by different platforms, thereby assisting in determining the most effective social media strategies for design offices.

Furthermore, design offices should explore how social media can be utilized not merely as a marketing tool but as an integral part of the creative process. This exploration could enable offices to develop more interactive and feedback-oriented social media strategies that facilitate real-time engagement with clients and stakeholders, thereby enhancing the responsiveness and adaptability of design processes. Additionally, examining the long-term effects of social media usage is crucial, particularly in understanding its impact on corporate identity and brand awareness, as these platforms increasingly shape public perception and brand loyalty. Future research could delve deeper into how these platforms influence the strategic aspects of office business models, including client acquisition, project management, and resource allocation, thereby affecting their competitive advantage within the industry. Finally, an investigation focused on how social media affects innovative practices and design trends in the sector would likely attract the interest of scholars working in this field, offering new insights into the evolving role of digital platforms in shaping the future of design.

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