



The Construction of Rider Community Identity In Yamaha Indonesia's Tiktok Content

Aden Bagus*, Khaerudin Imawan

Universitas Swadaya Gunung Jati

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*Correspondence: Aden Bagus

Email: aden.122100138@ugj.ac.id

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Abstract: The rise of social media, particularly TikTok, has prompted brands to act not only as producers but also as key players in shaping community identity. The research problem in this study arises from the scarcity of research examining how the identity of the rider community is constructed by automotive brands through short-form video content on TikTok. This study aims to analyze the construction of rider community identity built by the TikTok account @yamahaindonesia through linguistic, visual, and symbolic representations, as well as how that identity is interpreted by the audience. This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach, utilizing data collection techniques such as observation of Yamaha Indonesia's TikTok content from November 2025 and in-depth interviews with three informants who are Yamaha riders and TikTok users. Data analysis was conducted using semiotic analysis of representation. The results indicate that Yamaha constructs the identity of the rider community as a cohesive, modern, and community-oriented group through the use of casual language, visuals of group riding, and consistent brand symbols. However, this identity construction still reflects a negotiation between community interests and brand promotional interests. This study concludes that TikTok functions as a strategic space for symbolically framing the identity of the rider community, however, it is recommended that the brand engage the community in a more participatory manner to strengthen long-term loyalty.

Keywords: Tiktok, Community Identity, Yamaha Riders, Media Representation, Brand Communication.

Introduction

Technological advancements have spurred the emergence of identities, communities, and brands within the context of contemporary culture across various platforms, particularly short-form video-sharing platforms like TikTok. As of November 2025, there were over 194.37 million TikTok users in Indonesia, making Indonesia the country with the largest number of users in the world ([Dataloka, 2025](#)).

The two-wheeler ecosystem is quite large, as evidenced by data from the Indonesian National Police's Traffic Corps ([Korlantas Polri, 2025](#)), which reports that the number of motor vehicles owned by the Indonesian public has reached 168 million units; this indicates that the motorcycle sector is one of the most dynamic in Indonesia.

The motorcycle rider community in Indonesia has evolved not only as a space for the formation of a collective identity, but also as a social space that connects riders beyond just

riding activities. The motorcycle itself functions as an identity construct that extends beyond transportation, embodying cultural and social meanings for its riders ([Ward, 2022](#)). ([Wahyuni, 2023](#)) explains that identity symbols representing a lifestyle can emerge from the act of driving, reflecting lifestyle, freedom, and solidarity in popular culture. Furthermore, ([Prabowo, 2020](#)) found that strong social bonds based on shared values, a sense of belonging, and brand loyalty stem from the motorcycle community dynamics consistent with the foundational characteristics of brand communities ([Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001](#)).

Brands like Yamaha place great emphasis on the presence of the rider community as an integral part of their brand identity, rather than simply competing on product alone. Furthermore, TikTok, as a platform known for its dynamism, can help them build a strong sense of community identity.

There are several studies that examine brand marketing on TikTok, such as Rezek (2022), who analyzed how brands go viral on TikTok particularly among Gen Z audiences, and Barta et al. (2023), who examined the effectiveness of humor and hedonic experience in TikTok influencer marketing. Syarofi (2025) examines TikTok content and the lifestyles of Indonesian teenagers from the perspective of brand awareness and purchase intention, while Yohana & Christin (2024) analyzed identity construction and personal branding on TikTok. However, how community identities are shaped within digital brand narratives in the specific context of the motorcyclist community has not yet been addressed.

Three specific gaps remain in the existing literature. First, no study has examined how automotive brands use short-form video content to construct rather than merely reflect community identity through deliberate semiotic strategies. Second, studies on brand communities in Indonesia's motorcycle sector predominantly focus on loyalty and purchase behavior ([Almunawar & Wahyudi, 2024](#); [Novianti & Balqiah, 2023](#)) rather than on the symbolic and communicative mechanisms through which that community identity is produced. Third, while TikTok's participatory architecture generates new conditions for brand-audience negotiation ([Jenkins, 2006](#)), how brands navigate the tension between commercial interests and community authenticity has not been analyzed semiotically, particularly in the Indonesian automotive context.

This gap carries practical and academic significance. Indonesia's position as the world's largest TikTok user base ([Dataloka, 2025](#)), combined with 168 million registered motor vehicles ([Korlantas Polri, 2025](#)), makes the intersection of digital brand communication and rider community identity a consequential area of inquiry. Understanding how community identity is actively constructed not simply observed has direct implications for communication practitioners and brand managers in this sector.

This study makes two contributions to the existing literature. First, it extends Hall's (1997) semiotic framework of representation to short-form video content produced by automotive brands, offering an analytical approach to how linguistic, visual, and symbolic identity markers operate jointly in digital brand communication. Second, it advances the discourse on digital community identity in Indonesia by situating brand-constructed identity within the neo-tribal dynamics of contemporary motorcycle culture ([Maffesoli,](#)

[1996](#)), where a sense of communal belonging is increasingly mediated through brand symbols rather than emerging organically from within the community itself.

The significance of this study lies in the importance of understanding short-form video platforms as digital representations in the construction of community identity. Research has shown that audience engagement with a brand can be increased through the right content strategy by leveraging TikTok's visual and participatory nature ([Wiwarottami & Widyatama, 2024](#)). Furthermore, community benefits have been shown to play a significant role in driving brand loyalty within automotive social media brand communities ([Novianti & Balqiah, 2023](#)), making it important to understand how such communities are symbolically constructed in the digital space.

The purpose of this study is to analyze how Yamaha Indonesia's TikTok account constructs the identity of the rider community through linguistic, visual, and symbolic representations in its uploaded content, and to explain how this identity construction contributes to fostering a sense of community and loyalty to the Yamaha brand among the motorcycle rider community in Indonesia.

The concept of identity in communication studies is now viewed as the result of social and cultural processes, in line with Chris Barker (2004) In his work *The Sage Dictionary of Cultural Studies*, he asserts that representations and power relations in popular culture are formative factors in the construction of dynamic identities. The social identity theory proposed by Tajfel & Turner (1986) further explains that individuals construct their sense of self through group membership and intergroup categorization a process that extends into the digital realm. When individuals negotiate their positions within a group virtually, it is through these processes of symbolic interaction and social categorization that the construction of identity in the digital space emerges ([Yang & Fatimah, 2023](#)). This view is further supported by Hnit & Almanna (2025), who emphasize that digital identity construction simultaneously operates through personal, social, and narrative dimensions.

As shown by research from Meylina, Nuruzzaman & Lestari (2024) examined the semiotic analysis of the Gojek SOLV logo in relation to visual identity, finding that its role in shaping public perception and conveying values can be achieved through visual elements such as shape, color, and symbols. Then, a study on identity construction within brand communities, such as the research ([Avcı, 2024](#)) found that the formation of personal and social identity is one of the functions of social media.

Based on these various studies, it can be seen that although there have been many studies examining the relationship between social media and identity formation, there remains a research gap due to the lack of studies on how community identity is formed through symbolic representations in short-form video content produced by automotive brands, particularly Yamaha Indonesia. This study occupies a strategic position in expanding the discourse on the construction of digital identity within the realm of brand communication in Indonesia.

Methodology

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach, as it aims to understand the meaning behind the symbolic representations in Yamaha Indonesia's TikTok content. This approach allows the researcher to interpret social phenomena based on the context, language, and symbols that appear in digital media ([Creswell & Poth, 2018](#)).

The subject of this study is the official TikTok account @yamahaindonesia, which serves as the digital representation of the Yamaha brand and its rider community, the object of this study is the formation of the rider community's identity as represented through visual and symbolic elements as well as language in Yamaha Indonesia's TikTok video content.

The study was conducted online by analyzing TikTok content on the official @yamahaindonesia account during the month of November 2025. The TikTok social media platform, as a space for the digital representation of communities, served as the primary focus of this study.

Primary data was collected through observation of the video content on the TikTok account @yamahaindonesia, while secondary data was obtained through interviews with Yamaha riders who are active in the community and follow the TikTok account @yamahaindonesia, as well as from academic journals and digital documents regarding Yamaha's communication and marketing strategies in Indonesia.

Result and Discussion

This study uses qualitative data obtained through content observation of the official @yamahaindonesia TikTok account and in-depth interviews with Yamaha's audience/riders. The observation focused on three TikTok posts uploaded in November 2025, which included community content as well as product and event promotions. The analysis of the observations focused on linguistic, visual, and symbolic representations, as well as audience interaction in the form of comments and user responses.



Figure 1. Yamaha Indonesia's TikTok Account
Source: TikTok, 2025

The official Yamaha Motor Indonesia account on TikTok, with the verified username @yamahaindonesia. The profile displays the Yamaha logo with the slogans "Revs Your Heart" and "Semakin Di Depan," as well as account statistics such as the number of accounts followed, followers, and total likes. The profile description includes a welcome

message, the hashtag #SeMAXinDiDepan, and external links. Visually, this represents the corporate identity in the digital space, serving to build brand image and strengthen communication with the audience.

Interviews with three informants Yamaha riders and TikTok users were also conducted as secondary data. By examining the linguistic, visual, and symbolic dimensions of representation, as well as the audience identification process, these interviews were designed to understand how the identity of the Yamaha rider community is perceived by the audience.

A semiotic analysis of representations was selected as the analytical method, drawing on Hall's (1997) framework of cultural representation and meaning-making. This approach examines how signs, symbols, and language function to produce meaning within specific cultural contexts ([Barthes, 1972](#); [Chandler, 2017](#)), particularly in relation to TikTok as a space for constructing the identity of the rider community.

The Role of Language in Shaping the Identity of the Yamaha Rider Community

The analysis results show that the TikTok account @yamahaindonesia consistently uses a casual, narrative, and contemporary tone in content featuring the activities of the rider community. Yamaha creates an impression by positioning itself not merely as a company through the use of easily recognizable vocabulary and terminology in doing so, Yamaha seeks to demonstrate that it is also part of the rider community itself.



Figure 2. Casual Language Usage
Source: TikTok, 1 November 2025

At the denotative level, the text "NGGAK DIBUATIN KONTEN" simply means that no content has been made for the subject. However, at the connotative level, this phrase constructs an image of authenticity the rider is presented as real, unscripted, and organically part of the community rather than a brand-produced character. At the mythological level ([Barthes, 1972](#)), this functions as a naturalizing strategy: Yamaha erases its own role as

producer by staging the appearance of spontaneity, thereby reinforcing the myth that the rider community exists independently of the brand's commercial agenda. This is a characteristic move in what Hall (1997) calls the "preferred reading" a meaning encoded to appear self-evident and natural.

This finding is reinforced by the informants' accounts. Informant 1 noted that "the language is quite relaxed, not stiff at all sometimes it has a real motorcycle vibe, showing that riders are into togetherness and adventure" (personal communication, November 2025). Similarly, Informant 3 observed that "the language is simple and contemporary, making it easier to relate to for young people as if Yamaha understands that much of its audience is Gen Z" (personal communication, November 2025). These responses suggest that the casual register successfully bridges the symbolic distance between the brand and its audience.

Efforts to bridge the symbolic gap between the brand and its audience are the primary focus of this strategy, with a casual tone of voice serving as the main tool. Yamaha is building an image as a brand that "understands" the world of riders and shares their values through language that mirrors the community's conversational style. This demonstrates that language practices in digital content can shape the identity of the rider community.



Figure 3. Use of Promotional Language

Source: TikTok, 29 November 2025

The image shows a screenshot from a promotional video on the TikTok account of Yamaha Motor Indonesia. The image depicts a Yamaha motorcycle on display inside a dealership, with the camera angle focused on the front of the vehicle. The screen also displays the text "VISIT A YAMAHA DEALER," which indicates the use of promotional language. The use of promotional language in this content serves as a marketing communication strategy to encourage the audience to visit dealerships and strengthen the exposure of Yamaha products in the digital space

Informants acknowledged the distinction but remained accepting of it. Informant 2 stated, "if it's community content, the language is more natural but if it's product content, it's clearly promotional. Personally I don't mind, as long as it's not excessive" (personal communication, November 2025). Informant 1 echoed this ambivalence: "there's a mix.

Some of it is really natural, especially when they upload community videos. But when promoting a new product, you can tell right away though it's still pleasant to read" (personal communication, November 2025). This awareness without rejection indicates that informants engage with the content through what Hall (1997) describes as a negotiated reading accepting the dominant framing while maintaining a degree of critical distance.

The rider community built by Yamaha is not entirely autonomous, reflecting the tension between the community's symbolic interests and the brand's economic interests. Yamaha strives to maintain the impression of community closeness while simultaneously fulfilling promotional functions, highlighting the importance of language in this negotiation process. Yamaha's dynamic and situational TikTok content underscores that identity construction depends on the context of the message being conveyed.

Visual Representation: Lifestyle, Camaraderie, and Rider Discipline

The analysis results show that the content on the TikTok account @yamahaindonesia is dominated by riding visuals, particularly in content featuring community activities such as group rides and touring. There is a consistent presence of scenes depicting driving on highways, trips outside the city, and interactions among riders. A collective lifestyle that emphasizes friendship, solidarity, and shared experiences within the community is represented through these visuals.

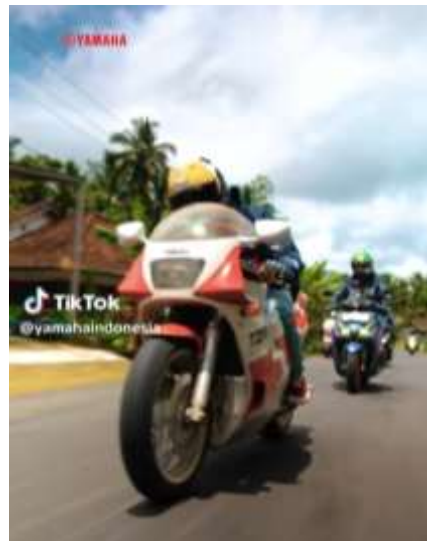


Figure 4. Use of Visual Riding
Source: TikTok, 1 November 2025

The image shows a screenshot of a video from the Yamaha Motor Indonesia TikTok account, featuring several motorcyclists riding on public roads. The images depict the dynamics of group riding against a backdrop of roadscapes and residential areas. The use of riding visuals in this content serves to represent the distinctive activities of the rider community while fostering a sense of camaraderie and showcasing a riding lifestyle that is integral to the community's identity in the digital space.

Informant 1 directly connected these visuals to lived experience: "touring, proper riding outfit, road atmosphere that really represents our lifestyle. It's relatable" (personal communication, November 2025), adding that "the combination of black riding outfit, blue

motorcycle, and outdoor road scenes that's already like an 'identity' for Yamaha riders" (personal communication, November 2025). Informant 2 extended this reading to include behavioral values: "especially in terms of riding discipline, brotherhood, and a neat lifestyle Yamaha is quite successful in showing that" (personal communication, November 2025). These responses confirm that riding visuals function not merely as aesthetic choices but as semiotic anchors for collective identity.

Denotatively, Figure 4 shows a group of motorcyclists riding on a public road against an urban backdrop. Connotatively, the group formation encodes solidarity, discipline, and shared purpose values central to rider community identity. At the mythological level, this visual perpetuates what can be termed the brotherhood myth of motorcycle culture: the idea that Yamaha riders constitute a unified, harmonious collective. Critically, however, this representation omits the heterogeneity of actual rider communities differences in class, riding style, and brand loyalty that exist in practice. The visual, in this sense, functions not as a mirror of reality but as an idealized projection that serves the brand's identity-building agenda, consistent with Chandler's (2017) observation that visual signs tend to naturalize ideological positions by presenting constructed meanings as given facts.

Social relationships among community members are also important because riding is a collective activity, meaning that the identity of Yamaha riders is not built on an individual basis. The image of the rider community as a cohesive and organized entity is reinforced through riding visuals in Yamaha's TikTok content, which convey a sense of togetherness. This demonstrates that, in building a brand-based community identity narrative in the digital media space, visuals play a crucial role in the process.



Figure 5. The Use of Visual Aesthetics
Source: TikTok, 11 November 2025

The image features visual content from Yamaha Motor Indonesia's TikTok account, showcasing the Yamaha NMAX Turbo motorcycle against an urban backdrop with eye-

catching graphic design. It also features the text “NMAX Turbo New Color” and the slogan “Semakin Di Depan” as part of Yamaha’s brand identity. The use of visual aesthetics in this content serves as a visual representation strategy to build a modern, dynamic product image that captures the audience’s attention in the digital media space.

Informant 2 described the visual style as “professional the framing, angles, and shooting locations capture the sporty and elegant side of Yamaha quite well” (personal communication, November 2025). Informant 3 was more granular: “the shots are aesthetic and the motorcycles look really clean especially the low-angle shot of the moving motorcycle, simple but neat outfits, and that distinctive blue color tone” (personal communication, November 2025). At the connotative level, these choices encode discipline and modernity; at the mythological level, they sustain the image of Yamaha riders as a polished, aspirational community ([Barthes, 1972](#)).

Symbolic Representation: Logos, Colors, and Hashtags as Identity Markers

The analysis results show that Yamaha’s brand symbols play a significant role in fostering a sense of community among the rider community featured in @yamahaindonesia’s TikTok content. Across various posts, symbols such as the Yamaha logo, the brand’s signature blue color, official hashtags, and community-related elements are consistently displayed. The presence of these symbols serves as a symbolic tool that fosters a sense of community and belonging within the rider community.



Figure 6. Use of Trademarks
Source: TikTok, 29 November 2025

The image displays the Yamaha MAXI brand logo accompanied by the slogan “LIVE IN THE HIGHER STAGE.” This image is used to demonstrate the use of Yamaha brand symbols and logos within the rider community, as well as the distinctive branding elements of Yamaha Motor Indonesia. This visual aesthetic functions as a visual representation strategy to build a modern and dynamic product image capable of capturing the audience’s attention in the digital media space.

Informant 1 articulated a sense of collective membership: “the logo and hashtag give a feeling of ‘we are one big Yamaha family’ so there’s a real sense of pride in that” (personal communication, November 2025). Informant 2 framed the symbols in terms of shared values rather than aesthetics alone: “for us in the community, those symbols are a reminder of discipline and togetherness” (personal communication, November 2025), further noting that “it’s the formation style, motorcycle color, and official apparel that makes the Yamaha community identity look distinctly different in the public eye” (personal communication, November 2025). These accounts are consistent with Muniz & O’Guinn’s (2001) concept of consciousness of kind the shared sense of connection among brand community members that is reinforced through symbolic differentiation from outsiders.

The Process of Audience Identification with the Rider Community's Identity

The Process of Audience Identification with the Motorcyclist Community Identity Research findings indicate that a process of emotional identification as generated by the content of the TikTok account @yamahaindonesia among a portion of the audience through a sense of connection to community activities.

The responses across informants reveal a spectrum of identification rather than a uniform reaction. Informant 3 expressed active motivation: "I'm happy like I'm more motivated to be active in the community" (personal communication, November 2025), connecting the content directly to brand loyalty: "I became more convinced about choosing Yamaha because I can see the community is active and looks solid" (personal communication, November 2025). Informant 2 offered a more measured response: "there's a sense of pride, especially when seeing the community appear orderly and positively the content helps maintain my pride as a Yamaha rider, even though my loyalty was already quite strong before" (personal communication, November 2025). Informant 1, by contrast, was notably reserved, stating that seeing the content felt "nothing out of the ordinary, though relatable enough" and that it "doesn't have that significant an influence" on loyalty (personal communication, November 2025).

For those who do identify, the content functions as a mirror of lived experience reinforcing existing values rather than instilling new ones. Community content, in this sense, operates as a symbolic space that consolidates rather than creates a sense of belonging.

These findings suggest that the formation of community identity through TikTok content is not deterministic. Personal experiences, individual preferences, and rational factors must be taken into account when building a digital identity. This indicates that content does not always directly increase loyalty. This variation in response is analytically consistent with Tajfel & Turner's (1986) social identity theory, which holds that the salience of group membership is not automatic but depends on contextual and individual factors. Informant 1's qualified response in particular supports the study's critical position that Yamaha's TikTok content fosters symbolic affiliation rather than guaranteed loyalty a distinction with significant implications for brand communication strategy.

The Construction of the Yamaha Rider Community's Identity on TikTok

The findings indicate that interrelated patterns of representation involving language, visuals, and symbols, along with the audience's identification process, shape the identity of the Yamaha rider community on TikTok. These patterns suggest that the digital communication practices employed by the brand do not allow the community's identity to emerge naturally.

At the linguistic level, Yamaha aims to build a symbolic connection with the rider community by using a casual and contemporary style of language. A sense of equality and camaraderie is created through community-oriented language, although when content is driven by commercial objectives, it is still presented using promotional language. This

indicates that the context of the message depends on the community identity being cultivated.

Visually, the community identity centers on the representation of riding together. A collective lifestyle emphasizing solidarity and shared experiences is shaped through touring activities, riding formations, and the atmosphere of the journey.

Meanwhile, on a symbolic level, logos, colors, hashtags, and community attributes serve as identity markers and tools for fostering a sense of community. These symbols not only strengthen the community's internal cohesion but also distinguish the identity of Yamaha riders from other motorcycle communities. Thus, brand symbols function as a mechanism of differentiation that affirms the Yamaha community's position within the automotive cultural landscape.

The audience identification process indicates that this identity construction fosters emotional closeness and a sense of belonging among some riders. However, this identification does not always lead to absolute brand loyalty; rather, it serves to strengthen symbolic affiliation and maintain the community's image. This finding aligns with Almunawar & Wahyudi (2024), who found that brand community membership positively influences brand loyalty within motorcycle communities, though the effect is mediated by how members perceive the value of belonging.

Yamaha Indonesia's TikTok content portrays the rider community as a cohesive, modern, and community-oriented group. Riders are depicted not as isolated individuals, but as part of an organized community through visuals of group rides, riding formations, and collective narratives. Additionally, the identity of Yamaha riders is framed as a young community relevant to digital culture, reflected in the use of casual language, contemporary communication styles, and content formats that follow TikTok trends. This positions Yamaha riders as part of a generation capable of adapting to social media developments. Yamaha's TikTok account also showcases a positive, disciplined, and classy rider identity through a neat and professional visual aesthetic and an image of orderly riding. This representation serves to build an image of a responsible community while strengthening the brand's legitimacy.

Critically, the identity constructed by Yamaha on TikTok is not a neutral reflection of the rider community, but a strategically curated representation that serves the brand's commercial interests. The tension between community authenticity and brand promotion evident in the coexistence of casual community language and explicit promotional calls-to-action mirrors what Muniz & O'Guinn (2001) describe as the inherent contradiction of brand communities: they are simultaneously spaces of genuine social bonding and instruments of brand loyalty cultivation. Yamaha's TikTok content leans heavily toward the latter, using the aesthetic codes of community spontaneity (informal language, group riding visuals) to mask the deliberate, top-down nature of the identity being constructed. This is not unique to Yamaha; it reflects a broader pattern in digital brand communication where, as Jenkins (2006) argues, participatory media platforms create the appearance of co-creation while the narrative authority largely remains with the brand.

Conclusion

This study shows that through the use of linguistic, visual, and symbolic representations in the digital media space, the TikTok account @yamahaindonesia actively constructs the identity of the Yamaha rider community. The identity of the Yamaha rider community is not presented as a neutral or natural entity, but rather as a process of meaning-making strategically framed by the brand. Yamaha fosters a sense of closeness with the rider community through a casual and contemporary tone as well as visual representations of group riding activities to strengthen a collective identity rooted in brotherhood and the community's lifestyle.

Identity markers and tools for fostering a sense of togetherness are also conveyed through the use of brand symbols such as logos, the color blue, hashtags, and community attributes. These symbols distinguish the Yamaha rider community from other rider communities. However, the negotiation between community representation and promotional messages in TikTok content suggests that the identity being built is not entirely free from commercial interests.

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