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Communication Styles of Politicians on Social Media – KO vs. PiS: Different Electorates, Different Strategies

Style komunikacji polityków w mediach społecznościowych – KO vs. PiS: różne elektoraty, różne strategie

ABSTRACT

The article compares the Instagram communication styles of Civic Coalition (KO) and Law and Justice (PiS) politicians during the 2025 presidential campaign in Poland. The study analyzes post style, tone, topics, and audience engagement across six selected politicians. The findings reveal clear differences: PiS relies on promotional content centered on national values and external threats, while KO favors emotional, inclusive, and personal narratives. Despite high posting activity, none of the analyzed politicians actively interacted with followers, limiting genuine engagement.

Keywords: social media, election campaign, communication style, Instagram, Polish politics

INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, social media are becoming an indispensable element of political communication. They are not merely platforms for the exchange of information but primarily arenas for expressing opinions, building relationships, and strengthe-

ning ties with audiences. Social media can be defined in various ways; however, the most frequently recurring elements in these definitions include content, people, and the interactions that occur through these platforms. It can therefore be assumed that social media constitute a group of applications based on the technological and ideological principles of Web 2.0, enabling both the creation and consumption of content [Bodys 2015: 110].

Political communication, on the other hand, is understood as a complex process encompassing media organizations, politicians, media broadcasters, voters/audiences, and society at large [Pietrzyk 2017: 169]. New media introduce new perspectives into this model, offering additional platforms for the exchange of information and opinions [Dąbrowska 2014: 251]. In a broad sense, political communication includes all processes of interaction between politicians or political parties and voters, with the transmission of information and the exertion of influence aimed at gaining or maintaining political power [Wilkos 2010: 63–64].

This study aims to analyze the communication styles of politicians on social media during the pre-election period, with particular emphasis on the diversity of approaches shaped by ideological preferences and electoral strategies of individual political groups. In doing so, it draws upon contemporary research on political authenticity. Studies by Rafał Leśniczak, Gunn Enli and Sarah Luebke highlight that authenticity in politics is not an inherent personal trait but a dynamic construct co-created by politicians, the media, and audiences. Enli conceptualizes authenticity as a mediated performance in which politicians employ communication channels to evoke impressions of sincerity, spontaneity, and ordinariness, stressing that authenticity is ultimately negotiated between the sender and the public. Luebke further emphasizes its performative dimension, pointing to stylistic choices, curated intimacy, and emotional transparency as tools for generating credibility and coherence. Leśniczak, analyzing the Polish context, adds a normative and ethical perspective by linking authenticity to the consistency of words and actions, responsible communication, and a readiness to engage in dialogue with citizens. Taken together, these perspectives allow political authenticity to be understood as a complex, relational, and strategic construct shaped by media practices, performative choices, and ethical expectations within the public sphere. In particular, four core dimensions of political authenticity – consistency, intimacy, ordinariness, and immediacy – can be identified and serve as key aspects for further analysis [Luebke 2021: 641–647; Leśniczak 2024: 164–165; Enli 2025: 85–91].

JUSTIFICATION OF THE RESEARCH SAMPLE SELECTION

In the study, the author chose to analyze Instagram communication of selected politicians from the Civic Coalition (*Koalicja Obywatelska*, KO) and Law and Justice (*Prawo i Sprawiedliwość*, PiS). Each platform features a distinct communication style

and different preferences among politicians. The aim was to compare how individual MPs use these platforms to interact with voters and how their communication styles differ across them.

Literature indicates that politicians' communication styles in social media vary in terms of message purpose, self-presentation, and relationships with audiences. A communication style can be seen as a set of linguistic and visual strategies aimed at building a specific image and engaging the online community. The basic styles include: an informational style, focused on facts and data with minimal self-promotion; a promotional style, aimed at creating a positive image by highlighting successes and visual elements; and a conversational style, which emphasizes interaction, encouraging discussion and responding to comments. There is also a mixed style, combining these approaches depending on political context or campaign needs. Experienced politicians tend to use a more assertive tone, while newcomers focus on social issues and build recognition through cautious, steady activity [Robak 2024: 193–196].

The choice of style is also shaped by cultural factors, the political system, and public expectations, meaning that strategies effective in one country may not yield the same results elsewhere. The group of analyzed politicians included:

Civic Coalition:
- Donald Tusk – leader of the Civic Coalition, very active with a broad reach, frequently uses Twitter (X) and Instagram;
- Rafał Trzaskowski – mayor of Warsaw, publishes regularly;
- Małgorzata Kidawa-Błońska – Marshal of the Senate, representative of a more centrist wing of the Civic Coalition, less confrontational.

Law and Justice:
- Mateusz Morawiecki – former prime minister, active on social media, often uses economic and patriotic messaging;
- Beata Szydło – former prime minister, strongly rooted in the conservative electorate, outspoken in the media;
- Mariusz Błaszczak – former minister of defense, frequently communicates on matters of security and the military.

The selection of politicians was deliberate to ensure representation of both groups in terms of leadership position, communication styles, and topics addressed on social media. From the Civic Coalition, figures like Donald Tusk and Rafał Trzaskowski were chosen due to their key roles and high recognition. Tusk, as party leader, often addresses national and European politics, using social media to build reach and mobilize voters. Trzaskowski combines an expert style with more informal communication, appealing to younger audiences. Małgorzata Kidawa-Błońska represents a more moderate wing, allowing analysis of how communication varies with the politician's tone and character.

For Law and Justice, Mateusz Morawiecki was selected for his role in shaping PiS narratives, especially economic themes; Beata Szydło, as a conservative figure popular with the traditional electorate; and Mariusz Błaszczak, focused on security

and defense. This selection enables comparison not only between parties but also within them, showing how strategies are tailored to different voter segments and personal profiles. It highlights contrasts in communication style (e.g. confrontational vs. moderate) and key topics, offering a fuller picture of social media use in Polish politics.

For the analysis, a categorization framework was devised by the authors to systematically classify posts using selected qualitative and quantitative variables, incorporating both formal and substantive dimensions to enable a comprehensive comparison.

1. Message style:
   • Informational – posts focused on providing data, facts, and official information.
   • Promotional – content centered on the politician's self-promotion, presenting achievements and successes.
   • Conversational – dialogue-style posts encouraging interaction and responding to audience comments.
   • Mixed – publications combining elements of informational, promotional, and conversational styles.

2. Tone of communication:
   • Moderate – balanced, emotionally neutral messaging.
   • Confrontational – content marked by criticism of opponents or clear polarization.
   • Expert – messages based on professional knowledge, analyses, and references to expertise.
   • Emotional – posts with a strong emotional charge, appealing to the audience's feelings.

3. Content form:
   • Text-based – posts containing text only.
   • Video – audiovisual materials.
   • Graphic/photo – visual content without a video component.
   • Link with commentary – links to other sources accompanied by the politician's comment.

4. Publication topic:
   • Economy – content related to economic and financial matters.
   • Security – issues connected with defense and public order.
   • Social issues – e.g. education, health care, family policy.
   • Foreign policy – international relations, EU politics.
   • Domestic politics – major political events in the country, conflicts with other politicians, etc.
   • Election campaign – presidential or parliamentary campaign ongoing in Poland during the study period.
   • Other – topics not covered by the above categories.

5. Audience engagement:
- Number of reactions – total likes, shares, and other interactions.
- Number of comments – total comments under the post.
- Level of interaction – indicator of whether the politician engages with the audience (e.g. responds to comments).

The above framework forms the basis for coding content and enables both quantitative and qualitative analysis to identify dominant communication styles and differences between politicians from various parties. The study focuses on the period 4–6 weeks before the election and between the first and second rounds of the presidential race (April 14 – June 1, 2025). This phase is marked by intensified and varied messaging: new ads, controversial topics, and a peak in social media activity. The time between rounds highlights the fierce competition, as Karol Nawrocki (officially independent, supported by Law and Justice) faced Rafał Trzaskowski (Civic Coalition). Analyzing this period captures the full range of strategies — from balanced informational posts to emotional appeals and direct attacks on opponents.

To ensure practical and reliable results, the study included a random sample of 30 posts per politician. This ensures:
- a representative selection of content;
- comparability between profiles;
- a realistic workload for manual coding.

Random sampling prevents bias in selecting only the most striking posts, while the limit allows for detailed analysis of style, tone, form, and topic within a manageable scope.

The decision to focus exclusively on Instagram stems from the desire to analyze a single, distinctive social media platform that combines visual, textual, and emotional elements – offering rich research potential for studying communication styles. Instagram, built around visual storytelling, provides an ideal environment for examining promotional and emotional styles of communication that dominate election campaigns. Unlike Twitter/X, which is designed for rapid responses and media-driven narratives, Instagram allows for more deliberate, narrative, and image-focused messaging. It offers diverse content formats – from photos and graphics to videos and stories – and attracts a younger, more active, and less politically committed audience, making it a valuable space for exploring strategies targeting new voter groups. Concentrating on Instagram also enables deeper qualitative analysis, enhances data comparability, and supports drawing more precise conclusions about image-building practices in a visually driven, emotionally charged environment [Mazurek-Łopacińska, Sobocińska 2017: 345]. This choice captures both the visual and textual dimensions of political communication, offering a comprehensive view of how politicians shape their image and engage different demographic groups, thus better reflecting the realities of modern election campaigns. Twitter/X, TikTok, and Facebook were excluded from the study. TikTok, dominated by short dynamic videos, prioritizes visual appeal over textual communication, making it less suited for

the qualitative analysis of written content. Facebook, while still popular in Poland, has seen user activity shift toward private groups and profiles, limiting access to content for public analysis. Additionally, Facebook increasingly serves as a tool for maintaining existing voter bases rather than expanding reach or fostering dynamic interactions during campaigns.

Considering these factors, the study focused on Instagram, which, as preliminary analyses showed, offers richer research material and better reflects current communication strategies of politicians during the election campaign. This approach allows resources to be concentrated on analyzing the most valuable and accessible data, ensuring the validity and reliability of the findings.

Selecting only 30 random posts per politician represents a key limitation of this study. While this sample provides insight into politicians' communication styles, it may not capture the full diversity of their messaging. The limited number of posts increases the risk of omitting important themes that could be crucial to campaign strategy, especially for politicians who post very frequently. Moreover, focusing on the 4–6 weeks before the election – while capturing the most intense phase of the campaign – may not reflect earlier stages of image-building, when communication is often more measured. After the campaign peak, communication may also take on a different character.

Another limitation is the subjectivity of manual coding. Analyzing style and tone involves the risk of interpretive error, particularly in relation to linguistic and emotional nuances. Although a pilot study and inter-coder reliability check will be conducted, differences in interpretation could still influence final results. Furthermore, the unique characteristics of each platform (e.g. Twitter/X vs. Instagram) affect content format and distribution; without accounting for these, the analysis may not fully capture politicians' communication strategies across platforms.

Finally, the use of public social media data requires adherence to ethical standards. Although politicians' posts are publicly available, care must be taken not to present content out of context in a way that distorts the author's intent or meaning. When analyzing user comments, anonymity must be ensured, avoiding disclosure of identities or citations that could breach privacy. Compliance with GDPR and platform regulations is essential, avoiding mass data scraping that could violate users' rights or platform policies.

An important aspect is the researcher's impartiality. Although the analyzed politicians represent different parties, the researcher must be aware of their own political beliefs and strive for objectivity in coding and interpreting the data. It is crucial that personal views do not influence the analysis process. Transparency and rigor are essential for the credibility of the study.

Based on the analysis of the posts, the following research hypotheses were formulated:

H1: Politicians from different parties, such as PiS and KO, adopt distinct communication styles on social media tailored to their electorates' characteristics.

H2: The communication style of politicians on social media significantly affects voters' perceptions of their image.

H3: Political activity on social media increases during the pre-election period, with communication becoming more diverse and intensive.

Guided by these hypotheses, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the main differences in communication styles between PiS and KO politicians on social media?

2. How do different forms of political communication influence voters' perceptions of politicians?

3. Which features of politicians' social media posts most effectively engage audiences?

4. What communication strategies are effective in attracting attention and mobilizing voters during the pre-election period?

By answering these questions, the study aims not only to identify differences in communication styles across parties but also to understand how politicians' social media activities impact citizens' attitudes and voting decisions.

RESEARCH RESULTS ANALYSIS. LAW AND JUSTICE

Mateusz Morawiecki's Instagram account is @morawieckipl and has 104,000 followers. It is worth noting that Morawiecki did not respond to any comments under his posts nor engage in other interactions, such as liking comments. He often posted more than once a day but tried to keep the posts focused on the same topic (Table 1).

Table 1. Mateusz Morawiecki – Instagram

Post ID	Date of publication	Style of message	Tone of communication	Topic	Engagement	Type of post
IG1MM	23.04.2025	Promotional	Confrontational	Economy	Number of likes: 717 Comments: 18	Video
IG2MM	26.04.2025	Conversational	Moderate	Others	Number of likes: 1,491 Comments: 14	Photo
IG3MM	29.04.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 843 Comments: 43	Video
IG4MM	30.04.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of Likes: 409 Comments: 7	Photo
IG5MM	30.04.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 431 Comments: 5	Photo
IG6MM	18.04.2025	Conversational	Moderate	Others	Number of likes: 1,448 Comments: 342	Video
IG7MM	15.04.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Others	Number of likes: 355 Comments: 8	Photo
IG8MM	19.04.2025	Conversational	Moderate	Others	Number of likes: 690 Comments: 41	Video
IG9MM	21.04.2025	Informational	Emotional	Foreign policy	Number of likes: 5501 Comments: 83	Graphic

Post ID	Date of publication	Style of message	Tone of communication	Topic	Engagement	Type of post
IG10MM	25.04.2025	Promotional	Confrontational	Economy	Number of likes: 433 Comments: 29	Video
IG11MM	2.05.2025	Informational	Moderate	Economy	Number of likes: 165 Comments: 3	Video
IG12MM	5.05.2025	Promotional	Confrontational	Election campaign	Number of likes: 720 Comments: 58	Video
IG13MM	7.05.2025	Promotional	Confrontational	Election campaign	Number of likes: 931 Comments: 155	Video
IG14MM	8.05.2025	Promotional	Moderate	Domestic policy	Number of likes: 616 Comments: 24	Video
IG15MM	9.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 2,866 Comments: 182	Photo
IG16MM	12.05.2025	Mixed	Confrontational	Social issues	Number of likes: 233 Comments: 16	Video
IG17MM	14.05.2025	Informational	Moderate	Foreign policy	Number of likes: 4,174 Comments: 114	Video
IG18MM	15.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 938 Comments: 117	Video
IG19MM	16.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 647 Comments: 67	Video
IG20MM	17.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 1,027 Comments: 67	Graphic
IG21MM	18.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 3,422 Comments: 83	Photo
IG22MM	19.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 2,118 Comments: 84	Graphic
IG23MM	20.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 648 Comments: 8	Photo
IG24MM	23.05.2025	Promotional	Confrontational	Election campaign	Number of likes: 511 Comments: 74	Video
IG25MM	24.05.2025	Promotional	Confrontational	Election campaign	Number of likes: 465 Comments 56	Video
IG26MM	26.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 631 Comments: 58	Video
IG27MM	26.05.202	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of Likes: 788 Comments: 119	Video
IG28MM	27.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 948 Comments: 31	Photo
IG29MM	28.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 535 Comments: 48	Video
IG230MM	1.06.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 3,297 Comments: 152	Graphic

Source: Authors' own study.

Note: Number of likes and comments for posts IG1MM–IG10MM: as of May 5, 2025; IGMM11–IGMM20: as of May 22, 2025; IGMM21–IGMM30: as of June 7, 2025.

Morawiecki's communication style is dominated by promotional content aimed at showcasing economic successes and emphasizing the state's role in economic development. Informational and conversational elements are also visible, especial-

ly in posts related to foreign and social policy. The tone is marked by a high level of emotionality and confrontation – Morawiecki often uses mobilizing rhetoric while maintaining moderation in pragmatic messages. The content format mainly includes videos and photos, with graphics used less frequently. His posts focus on the economy, foreign policy, and the election campaign. Audience engagement is relatively high, but Morawiecki does not interact with users, limiting the level of dialogue. Notably, between the first and second rounds of the presidential elections, Morawiecki began directly attacking Trzaskowski in his materials (e.g. IG24MM). He emphasized that Trzaskowski lacked the qualities needed for a "president in difficult times", contrasting Trzaskowski's alleged fatigue during the TVP debate on May 23, 2025, with Nawrocki's strength and composure. Morawiecki continued this theme in his video materials over the following days, also stressing that Nawrocki is a "true patriot" in contrast to his opponent.

Beata Szydło's Instagram profile is @szydlo.beata and has 15.9 thousand followers. She did not respond to comments on her posts nor engage in other interactions, such as liking comments (Table 2).

Table 2. Beata Szydło – Instagram

Post ID	Date of publication	Style of message	Tone of communication	Topic	Engagement	Type of post
IG1BS	19.04.2025	Promotional	Moderate	Other	Number of likes: 249 Comments: 27	Video
IG2BS	23.04.2025	Promotional	Confrontational	Domestic policy	Number of likes: 266 Comments: 99	Video
IG3BS	24.04.2025	Informational	Moderate	Foreign policy	Number of likes: 338 Comments: 16	Photo
IG4BS	25.04.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 624 Comments: 261	Video
IG5BS	27.04.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 439 Comments: 189	Video
IG6BS	28.04.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 266 Comments: 24	Video
IG7BS	2.05.2025	Informational	Expert	Other	Number of likes: 209 Comments: 8	Photo
IG7BS	4.05.2025	Informational	Expert	Other	Number of likes: 88 Comments: 3	Photo
IG8BS	6.05.2025	Informational	Confrontational	Domestic policy	Number of likes: 282 Comments: 48	Video
IG9BS	7.05.2025	Informational	Expert	Foreign policy	Number of likes: 200 Comments: 80	Video
IG10BS	7.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 201 Comments: 71	Video
IG11BS	10.05.2025	Promocyjny	Moderate	Election campaign	Number of likes: 267 Comments: 215	Video
IG12BS	11.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 490 Comments: 236	Video
IG13BS	12.05.2025	Promotional	Moderate	Election campaign	Number of likes: 75 Comments: 10	Graphic

Post ID	Date of publication	Style of message	Tone of communication	Topic	Engagement	Type of post
IG14BS	14.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 475 Comments: 263	Video
IG15BS	15.05.2025	Promotional	Informational	Election campaign	Number of likes: 184 Comments: 50	Video
IG16BS	15.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 323 Comments: 97	Video
IG17BS	15.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 297 Comments: 39	Video
IG18BS	15.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 702 Comments: 71	Photo
IG19BS	17.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 421 Comments: 31	Graphic
IG20BS	17.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 323 Comments: 43	Video
IG21BS	21.05.2025	Promotional	Confrontational	Election campaign	Number of likes: 217 Comments: 78	Video
IG22BS	21.05.2025	Informational	Expert	Election campaign / security	Number of likes: 124 Comments: 14	Video
IG23BS	22.052025	Informational	Expert	Foreign policy	Number of likes: 155 Comments: 29	Video
IG24BS	23.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 954 Comments: 345	Video
IG25BS	24.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 97 Comments: 33	Video
IG26BS	26.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 337 Comments: 101	Video
IG27BS	26.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 214 Comments: 28	Graphic
IG28BS	29.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 184 Comments: 59	Video
IG29BS	29.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 277 Comments: 91	Video
IG30BS	1. 06.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 263 Comments: 48	Video

Source: Authors' own study

Note: Number of likes and comments for posts IG1MM–IG10MM: as of May 5, 2025; IGMM11–IGMM20: as of May 22, 2025; IGMM21–IGMM30: as of June 7, 2025.

Beata Szydło mainly uses a promotional communication style with some informational elements. Her messages focus on community, family, and national values. The dominant tone is emotional, often referencing tradition and unity, while maintaining a moderate expression. Expert content also appears, especially regarding foreign policy. Most posts are videos and photos. Thematically, her content centers on the election campaign, social values, and national politics. Despite a relatively high number of comments, her lack of interaction limits the conversational aspect of her profile. Between the two election rounds, Szydło occasionally posted confrontational content targeting Trzaskowski, although she generally avoided such communication

earlier in the period. Among all analyzed politicians from both parties, she most frequently shared materials from meetings with voters, shaping an image of being "close to the people". It is unfortunate she did not leverage this image further by engaging more actively with followers on social media to strengthen this connection.

Mariusz Błaszczak's Instagram profile is @mariusz.blaszczak_ and has 4,060 followers. He does not engage in any interactions with his followers. Notably, as a former Minister of National Defense, Błaszczak frequently addresses topics related to the ministry's competencies on his profile. He posts about foreign policy and national security, even though he no longer holds this position. Błaszczak published so few posts during the analyzed period that only 27 posts could be analyzed (Table 3).

Table 3. Mariusz Błaszczak – Instagram

Post ID	Date of publication	Style of message	Tone of communication	Topic	Engagement	Type of post
IG1MB	14.04.2025	Promotional	Confrontational	Election campaign	Number of likes: 119 Comments: 15	Video
IG2MB	17.04.2025	Promotional	Moderate	Election campaign	Number of likes: 241 Comments: 36	Graphic
IG3MB	25.04.2025	Promotional	Moderate	Election campaign	Number of likes: 72 Comments: 4	Graphic
IG4MB	26.04.2025	Informational	Moderate	Others	Number of likes: 277 Comments: 38	Photo
IG5MB	30.04.2025	Promotional	Moderate	Foreign policy	Number of likes: 82 Comments: 4	Photo
IG6MB	2.05.2025	Promotional	Moderate	Foreign policy	Number of likes: 190 Comments: 23	Photo
IG7MB	2.05.2025	Informational	Emotional	Others	Number of likes: 71 Comments: 1	Photo
IG8MB	3.05.2025	Informational	Emotional	Others	Number of likes: 71 Comments: 3	Graphic
IG9MB	6.05.2025	Promotional	Moderate	Election campaign	Number of likes: 58 Comments: 12	Photo
IG10MB	9.05.2025	Informational	Moderate	Others	Number of likes: 132 Comments: 15	Photo
IG11MB	10.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 127 Comments: 30	Photo
IG12MB	10.05,2025	Informational	Expert	Foreign policy	Number of likes: 60 Comments: 13	Photo
IG13MB	12.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 99 Comments: 9	Graphic
IG14MB	13.05.2025	Promotional	Confrontational	Election campaign	Number of likes: 87 Comments: 14	Video
IG15MB	15.05.2025	Promotional	Confrontational	Election campaign	Number of likes: 48 Comments: 10	Video
IG16MB	16.05.2025	Promotional	Confrontational	Election campaign	Number of likes: 98 Comments: 14	Video
IG17MB	17.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 136 Comments: 12	Graphic
IG18MB	19.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 110 Comments: 11	Graphic

Post ID	Date of publication	Style of message	Tone of communication	Topic	Engagement	Type of post
IG19MB	19.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 149 Comments: 22	Graphic
IG20MB	20.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 114 Comments: 20	Video
IG21MB	21.05.2025	Promotional	Confrontational	Election campaign	Number of likes: 222 Comments: 24	Graphic
IG22MB	22.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 108 Comments: 24	Video
IG23MB	24.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 179 Comments: 25	Graphic
IG24MB	25.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 196 Comments: 32	Photo
IG25MB	30.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 78 Comments: 11	Video
IG26MB	1.06.2025	Promotional	Confrontational	Election campaign	Number of likes: 64 Comments: 7	Video
IG27MB	1.06. 2025	Promotional	Moderate	Election campaign	Number of likes: 170 Comments: 10	Graphic

Source: Authors' own study

Note: Number of likes and comments for posts IG1MB–IG8MB: as of May 5, 2025; IG9MB–IG17MB: as of May 22, 2025; IG18MB–IG30MB: as of June 7, 2025.

Mariusz Błaszczak's communication style is almost exclusively promotional, with occasional informational content. His tone is highly confrontational and emotional, especially toward political opponents like Rafał Trzaskowski and Donald Tusk. His posts focus on national security threats and foreign policy, using photos, graphics, and videos. Engagement is low due to his infrequent posting and lack of interaction. Błaszczak's style is defensive and alarmist, emphasizing external threats and national unity. He was the only one to publish direct attack videos against Trzaskowski, including claims that Trzaskowski's campaign is funded by so-called "building cleaners" (groups involved in corrupt property takeovers during Warsaw's reprivatisation scandals) and that if elected, Trzaskowski would send Polish troops to Ukraine "on Tusk's orders". Between May 13 and June 1, 2025, Błaszczak aggressively attacked Trzaskowski and Tusk, often calling Trzaskowski "Tusk's candidate" to highlight his lack of independence. Although usually posting rarely and avoiding videos, from May 18 to June 1, Błaszczak posted daily, often sharing professionally produced studio videos, likely created in cooperation with Nawrocki's campaign.

Despite their shared party affiliation, the politicians used different communication approaches on social media: Morawiecki focused on the economy and expertise, Szydło emphasized emotions and social values presenting herself as close to citizens, while Błaszczak used a language of threat and defense centered on security and national discipline. All showed low direct interaction with followers, limiting conversational engagement. During the presidential campaign, all three openly supported Karol Nawrocki, speaking warmly about him, participating in voter meetings to promote him, and sharing materials from his campaign team, either jointly or

individually. On May 17, 2025, the day before the first round of the presidential election, all analyzed politicians posted the same graphic encouraging votes for Karol Nawrocki. This was the only clear instance where they shared materials provided by the campaign team, and all three complied.

CIVIC COALITION

Donald Tusk's Instagram account, @donaldtusk, has 592,000 followers. Although he does not engage directly with followers, he often addresses them warmly with phrases like "Dear ones" or "Listen, dear ones", which creates a closer connection compared to other politicians who use more formal greetings like "Ladies and Gentlemen" or "Dear Voters". This casual tone is typical for social media. Tusk posts multiple times daily, covering a variety of topics (Table 4).

Table 4. Donald Tusk – Instagram

Post ID	Date of publication	Style of message	Tone of communication	Topic	Engagement	Type of post
IG1DT	19.04.2024	Conversational	Moderate	Others	Number of likes: 14,857 Comments: 956	Video
IG2DT	21.04.2025	Informational	Moderate	Others	Number of likes: 25,243 Comments: 417	Photo
IG3DT	21.04.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Domestic policy	Number of likes: 11,145 Comments: 499	Video
IG4DT	25.04.2025	Promotional	Moderate	Others	Number of likes: 11,786 Comments: 856	Video
IG5DT	1.05.2025	Informational	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 13,645 Comments: 557	Video
IG6DT	1.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 5,233 Comments: 230	Video
IG7DT	2.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Others	Number of likes: 12,543 Comments: 785	Video
IG8DT	2.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 8,879 Comments: 364	Photo
IG9DT	3.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Others	Number of likes: 6,656 Comments: 365	Photo
IG10DT	5.05.2025	Promotional	Confrontational	Election campaign	Number of Likes: 21,001 Comments: 398	Video
IG11DT*	9.05.2025	Promotional	Moderate	Foreign policy	Number of likes: 53,409 Comments: 677	Photo
IG12DT**	10.05.2025	Informational	Moderate	Foreign policy	Number of likes: 52,001 Comments: 1,286	Photo
IG13DT	10.05. 2025	Informational	Emotional	Foreign policy	Number of likes: 16,489 Comments: 527	Photo
IG14DT	11.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Others	Number of likes: 31,701 Comments: 723	Photo
IG15DT	12.05.2025	Promotional	Informational	Others	Number of likes: 11,019 Comments: 500	Video

Post ID	Date of publication	Style of message	Tone of communication	Topic	Engagement	Type of post
IG16DT	15.05.2025	Mixed	Emotional	Security	Number of likes: 3,994 Comments: 214	Video
IG17DT	16.05.2025	Informational	Moderate	Foreign policy	Number of likes: 13,304 Comments: 418	Photo
IG18DT	16.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 24,403 Comments: 2183	Video
IG19DT	16.05.2025	Informational	Expert	Foreign policy	Number of likes: 9,991 Comments: 728	Photo
IG20DT	17.05.2025	Promotional	Moderate	Others	Number of likes: 3,946 Comments: 103	Video
IG21DT	18.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 31,967 Comments: 1140	Photo
IG22DT	19.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 20,789 Comments: 1,513	Video
IG23DT	20.05.2025	Promotional	Confrontational	Election campaign	Number of likes: 8,591 Comments: 1,086	Video
IG24DT	22.05.2025	Promotional	Moderate	Foreign policy	Number of likes: 12,811 Comments: 412	Graphic
IG25DT	25.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 13,705 Comments: 804	Video
IG26DT	25.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 29,398 Comments: 950	Video
IG27DT	26.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Others	Number of likes: 28,544 Comments: 656	Photo
IG28DT	27.05.2025	Informational	Moderate	Economy	Number of likes: 4,400 Comments: 618	Video
IG29DT	28.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 7,924 Comments: 500	Video
IG30DT	1.06.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 39,636 Comments: 1,744	Photo

Source: Authors' own study.

* The President of France, Emmanuel Macron, was tagged as a co-author of the post (which referred to their meeting).
** The post listed the President of France, Emmanuel Macron, the Mayor of London, Keir Starmer, and the official accounts of the German Chancellor as co-authors (the post referred to their meeting).
Note: Number of likes and comments for posts IG1DT–IG10DT: as of May 5, 2025; IG15DT–IG20DT: as of May 22, 2025; IG20DT–IG30DT: as of June 7, 2025.

Donald Tusk avoided posting election campaign content, which made up only a small part of his posts until May 18. Before that, he mostly shared usual content showing him as a hardworking Prime Minister and strong leader, mixed with personal posts like pictures of his dog or childhood photos. Only after the first round of the presidential election did he openly support Rafał Trzaskowski and occasionally post confrontational content targeting the Law and Justice party. Rafał Trzaskowski's Instagram, @trzaskowskirafal, has 475,000 followers. As a presidential candidate, he posts exclusively campaign-related content, very actively with several posts a day, but does not engage directly with followers (Table 5).

Table 5. Rafał Trzaskowski – Instagram

Post ID	Date of publication	Style of message	Tone of communication	Topic	Engagement	Type of post
IG1RT	29.04.2025	Promotional	Moderate	Election campaign	Number of likes: 5,950 Comments: 114	Photo
IG2RT	30.04.2025	Promotional	Moderate	Election campaign	Number of likes: 3,937 Comments: 98	Photo
IG3RT	2.05.2025	Promotional	Confrontational	Election campaign	Number of likes: 11,957 Comments: 879	Video
IG4RT	2.05.2025	Promotional	Moderate	Election campaign	Number of likes: 7,807 Comments: 267	Photo
IG5RT	2.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 6,728 Comments: 194	Video
IG6RT	3.05. 2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 5,547 Comments: 145	Photo
IG7RT	3.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 4,184 Comments: 434	Video
IG8RT	4.05.2025	Promotional	Confrontational	Election campaign	Number of likes: 10,678 Comments: 506	Video
IG9RT	5.05.2025	Informational	Moderate	Other	Number of likes: 8,479 Comments: 146	Photo
IG10RT	6.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 4,983 Comments: 127	Photo
IG11RT	7.05.2025	Promotional	Moderate	Election campaign	Number of likes: 9,607 Comments: 298	Photo
IG12RT	8.05.2025	Promotional	Moderate	Election campaign	Number of likes: 5,270 Comments: 164	Graphic
IG13RT	9.05.2025	Promotional	Confrontational	Other	Number of likes: 23,989 Comments: 684	Video
IG14RT	10.05.2025	Promotional	Confrontational	Other	Number of likes: 7,540 Comments: 311	Video
IG15RT	12.05.2025	Promotional	Confrontational	Election campaign	Number of likes: 5,549 Comments: 254	Video
IG16RT	15.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 6002 Comments: 197	Photo
IG17RT	16.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 4,877 Comments: 167	Photo
IG18RT	17.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 4,350 Comments: 83	Photo
IG19RT	18.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 40,514 Comments: 1,190	Photo
IG20RT	19.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 35,190 Comments: 1,000	Photo
IG21RT	19.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 12,400 Comments: 5,225	Photo
IG22RT	20.05.2025	Promotional	Moderate	Election campaign	Number of likes: 14,301 Comments: 387	Photo
IG23RT	25.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 31,131 Comments: 868	Video
IG24RT	26.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 12,226 Comments: 288	Video
IG25RT	27.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 12,523 Comments: 608	Video

Post ID	Date of publication	Style of message	Tone of communication	Topic	Engagement	Type of post
IG26RT	29.05. 2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 14,671 Comments: 213	Photo
IG27RT	30.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 11,699 Comments: 293	Video
IG28RT	30.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 16,583 Comments: 720	Video
IG29RT	1.06. 2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 27,798 Comments: 650	Video
IG30RT	1.06.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 20,201 Comments: 492	Video

Source: Authors' own study.

Note:Number of likes and comments for posts IG1RT–IG10RT: as of May 9, 2025; IG11RT–IG23RT: as of May 22, 2025; IG24RT–IG30RT: as of June 7, 2025.

Małgorzata Kidawa-Błońska's Instagram account, @mkblonska, has 32,000 followers. She does not engage with followers and posts very actively, sometimes multiple times a day. She often shares joint posts with the @senat_rp account, reflecting her role as Marshal of the Senate. Kidawa-Błońska mostly avoided election campaign topics, focusing mainly on her duties as Senate Marshal (Table 6).

Table 6. Małgorzata Kidawa-Błońska – Instagram

Post ID	Date of publication	Style of message	Tone of communication	Topic	Engagement	Type of post
IG1MKB	22.04.2025	Informational	Moderate	Domestic policy	Number of likes: 139 Comments: 1	Graphic
IG2MKB	23.04.2025	Informational	Moderate	Domestic policy	Number of likes: 114 Comments: 1	Graphic
IG3MKB	25.04.2025	Promotional	Moderate	Foreign policy	Number of likes: 134 Comments: 10	Photo
IG4MKB	2.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Domestic policy	Number of likes: 173 Comments: 2	Photo
IG5MKB	3.05. 2025	Informational	Moderate	Other	Number of likes: 351 Comments: 2	Graphic
IG6MKB	3.05. 2025	Promotional	Moderate	Other	Number of likes: 271 Comments: 5	Photo
IG7MKB	5.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Other	Number of likes: 459 Comments: 8	Photo
IG8MKB	6.05.2025	Promotional	Conversational	Foreign policy	Number of likes: 71 Comments: 3	Photo
IG9MKB	7.05.2025	Informational	Moderate	Foreign policy	Number of likes: 72 Comments: 0	Photo
IG10MKB	7.05.2025	Informational	Moderate	Foreign policy	Number of likes: 139 Comments: 4	Photo
IG11MKB	8.05.2025	Informacyjny	Moderate	Social issues	Number of likes: 536 Comments: 3	Photo
IG12MKB	9.05.2024	Promotional	Moderate	Foreign policy	Number of Likes: 85 Comments: 3	Photo
IG13MKB	12.05.2025	Informational	Moderate	Others	Number of likes: 36 Comments: 0	Graphic

Post ID	Date of publication	Style of message	Tone of communication	Topic	Engagement	Type of post
IG14MKB	12.05.2025	Informational	Moderate	Others	Number of likes: 17 Comments: 0	Photo
IG15MKB	12.05.2025	Informational	Moderate	Others	Number of likes: 89 Comments: 0	Photo
IG16MKB	14.05.2025	Informational	Moderate	Others	Number of likes: 65 Comments: 0	Photo
IG17MKB	15.05.2025	Informational	Moderate	Others	Number of likes: 33 Comments: 0	Photo
IG18MKB	16.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 629 Comments: 29	Photo
IG19MKB	18.05.2025	Promotional	Moderate	Others	Number of likes: 530 Comments: 0	Photo
IG20MKB	19.05.2024	Promotional	Moderate	Others	Number of likes: 81 Comments: 0	Photo
IG21MKB	20.05 2025	Promocyjny	Moderate	Others	Number of likes: 98 Comments: 0	Photo
IG22MKB	22.05.2025	Promotional	Moderate	Others	Number of likes: 86 Comments: 1	Photo
IG23MKB	22.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 232 Comments: 13	Video
IG24MKB	25.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 591 Comments: 27	Video
IG25MKB	26.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 85 Comments: 0	Video
IG26MKB	26.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 574 Comments: 28	Video
IG27MKB	26.05.2025	Promotional	Moderate	Others	Number of likes: 158 Comments: 2	Photo
IG28MKB	27.05.2025	Promotional	Moderate	Others	Number of likes: 41 Comments: 1	Photo
IG29MKB	27.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 120 Comments: 6	Photo
IG30MKB	29.05.2025	Promotional	Emotional	Election campaign	Number of likes: 196 Comments: 7	Video

Source: Authors' own study.

Note: Number of likes and comments for posts IG1MKB–IG10MKB: as of May 9, 2025; IG11MKB–IG30MKB: as of June 7, 2025.

Małgorzata Kidawa-Błońska was the only politician among those analyzed from both KO and PiS who responded to the tragic event on May 7, 2025, at the University of Warsaw, where a student brutally murdered a female staff member and attempted to kill another [*"Bez wahania, bez...* 2025]. This incident shocked the public, and official condolences were posted on Kidawa-Błońska's and the Senate's profiles. Kidawa-Błońska largely avoided promoting Rafał Trzaskowski's presidential campaign, limiting herself to stating she would vote for him. Only from May 26, 2025, did she start posting content aimed mainly at Poles living abroad, encouraging them to register and vote. On Mother's Day, she urged mothers to vote "in the most important election in recent years", without directly naming Trzaskowski, emphasizing

the need to choose wisely for Poland's development and security. Her posts often focused on anniversaries (e.g. International Family Day on May 15 and important Polish historical dates). She posted frequently, sometimes multiple times a day, but the content was mostly static – photos and graphics – with very rare video material.

CONCLUSION

This analysis compares the Instagram communication strategies of politicians from Poland's Civic Coalition (KO) and Law and Justice (PiS) parties during the presidential election campaign. Despite sharing similar political goals within their camps, the two groups employed notably different approaches in style, tone, and engagement with their audiences. The following points highlight the key distinctions and similarities in their social media presence and messaging tactics.

1. Overall approach

PiS politicians heavily showcased meetings with voters and presented a united front supporting Karol Nawrocki, their presidential candidate, often leveraging their authority (e.g. former premiers Szydło and Morawiecki, ex-Defense Minister Błaszczak) as experts endorsing Nawrocki. In contrast, KO politicians appeared more detached, focusing on individual matters and showing less visible support or engagement with Trzaskowski's campaign.

2. Communication style

Both groups primarily use promotional styles. PiS (especially Morawiecki and Błaszczak) focuses on government achievements, national values, and security. KO politicians (including Tusk and Trzaskowski) blend promotion with conversational and inclusive language, aiming to build closer relationships with followers.

3. Tone

PiS employs a confrontational and emotional tone, especially attacking opposition figures like Trzaskowski (notably Błaszczak). KO adopts a more moderate, emotionally positive tone focused on social mobilization and unity, though some confrontation appeared late in the campaign.

4. Content themes

PiS centers on elections, economy, security, and foreign policy, reflecting a conservative, state-centered message. KO emphasizes social issues and personal stories, sharing private life moments (Tusk's personal photos) and direct voter engagement (Trzaskowski).

5. Content format

Both favor visual content (photos, videos). PiS uses more polished, studio-quality materials (notably Błaszczak post-first round), while KO tends toward authentic, everyday campaign moments.

6. Audience interaction

None of the politicians actively responded to comments or engaged deeply with followers. However, KO shortens social distance through more informal language and personal posts (e.g. Tusk's "Dear ones", Trzaskowski's voter interactions), enhancing perceived authenticity.

7. Support in the second round

PiS politicians uniformly and actively supported Nawrocki with coordinated posts and official campaign materials. KO's involvement was initially subdued but became more pronounced later in support of Trzaskowski.

Table 7. Comparison of communication styles – KO vs. PiS

Category	KO – dominant features	PiS – dominant features	Shared elements	Key differences
Style of message	Promotional, conversational, mixed	Promotional, informational	Promotional style dominates	KO uses mixed and conversational style more often
Tone of communication	Moderate, emotional, sometimes confrontational	Emotional, confrontational, less often moderate	Strong emotional presence in the message	KO softens the message, PiS uses polarising rhetoric more often
Topic	Campaign, social issues, private life, foreign policy	Campaign, economy, security, patriotism	Campaign and political topics	KO covers social and personal topics more widely
Form of content	Photos, videos, graphics; often event coverage	Videos, photos, professionally prepared materials	Visual kontent prevails	KO aims for authenticity, PiS for professionalism
Interactions	No direct interaction; inclusive language	No interaction with the audience	No direct dialogue	KO uses more informal, closeness-building language
Support for candidates	Trzaskowski mainly supported after the first round	Nawrocki strongly and continuously supported from the beginning	Support for party's own candidates	PiS followed a more coordinated support strategy

Source: Authors' own study.

Analysis of social media communication by Poland's two largest political parties – Law and Justice and the Civic Coalition – reveals significant differences in strategy, style, and tone. PiS politicians display a centralized and uniform communication approach, emphasizing patriotism, security, and a strong state, with professionally produced content and messaging firmly rooted in party strategy. In contrast, KO politicians favor a more diverse range of styles and topics, adopting a personalized narrative that appeals to a broader electorate. Both groups rely heavily on Instagram for self-promotion, yet KO emphasizes narrative and dialogic engagement, while PiS primarily focuses on mobilizing its base.

These patterns highlight that communication strategies are closely linked to party ideology, methods of voter mobilization, and approaches to image-building. KO representatives more frequently use inclusive language, reduce distance with their audience, and incorporate personal, social, and emotional themes. PiS politicians, on

the other hand, employ a promotional and sometimes confrontational tone, concentrating on economy, security, and national values. Despite active use of Instagram for self-presentation by both parties, there is a noticeable lack of interactive engagement with followers, limiting the conversational potential of the platform and potentially weakening perceived authenticity.

Integrating the concept of political authenticity provides a useful lens for understanding these differences. Research by Leśniczak [2024], Enli [2025], and Luebke [2021] demonstrates that political authenticity is not an innate trait but a relational construct shaped by politicians, media, and audiences. Authenticity functions as a strategic performance, combining emotional transparency, curated intimacy, and coherent self-presentation to build credibility. Within this framework, four core dimensions – consistency, intimacy, ordinariness, and immediacy – can be identified as critical markers of authentic political communication and serve as key aspects for further analysis. Applying this perspective to PiS and KO, it becomes evident that KO's more personalized and inclusive approach aligns with several of these dimensions, particularly intimacy and immediacy, whereas PiS's highly controlled, top-down messaging prioritizes consistency and strategic coherence but limits relational closeness with the audience.

Understanding these dynamics underscores the challenge for contemporary politicians: leveraging the technical features of social media to create authentic, engaging, and credible communication that resonates with voters, while balancing strategic objectives and party identity. By evaluating communication through the lens of political authenticity and its four core dimensions, researchers can gain deeper insight into the strengths and limitations of digital strategies employed by different political groups.

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STYLE KOMUNIKACJI POLITYKÓW W MEDIACH SPOŁECZNOŚCIOWYCH – KO VS. PIS: RÓŻNE ELEKTORATY, RÓŻNE STRATEGIE

Streszczenie: Artykuł porównuje style komunikacji na Instagramie polityków Koalicji Obywatelskiej (KO) oraz Prawa i Sprawiedliwości (PiS) w trakcie kampanii prezydenckiej w Polsce w 2025 roku. Badanie obejmuje analizę stylu publikowanych postów, tonu przekazu, podejmowanej tematyki oraz poziomu zaangażowania odbiorców w przypadku sześciu wybranych polityków. Wyniki wskazują na wyraźne różnice między ugrupowaniami: politycy PiS częściej stosują treści o charakterze promocyjnym, koncentrujące się na wartościach narodowych oraz narracjach dotyczących zagrożeń zewnętrznych, natomiast politycy KO preferują przekaz emocjonalny, inkluzyjny oraz bardziej personalny. Pomimo wysokiej aktywności publikacyjnej, żaden z analizowanych polityków nie prowadził realnej interakcji z użytkownikami, co ograniczało poziom autentycznego zaangażowania odbiorców.

Słowa kluczowe: media społecznościowe, kampania wyborcza, styl komunikacji, Instagram, polityka w Polsce

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