

Creative Communication: Marketing Public Relations Strategy In Sayurbox

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ABSTRACT

Start-up companies have emerged driven by advances in information technology. The company has a fast and dynamic pattern of change in running its business and is always required to make continuous improvements to company activities to improve existence. Sayurbox is a start-up company engaged in providing vegetables and fruits comfortably through websites and mobile applications that can maintain its existence where many similar start-up companies have fallen. Marketing Public Relations (MPR) is part of the overall marketing strategy of a company as a liaison between the company and consumers and the wider community through the delivery of information, programs and convincing impressions. This research aims to analyze communication strategy of marketing public relations from Sayurbox of maintaining existence. This research methodology uses qualitative research with a case study approach, data is collected through interviews. The results showed that the Public Relations Marketing implementing differentiation strategy with open communication direction on objective and functions. Sayurbox carried out through an independent department function consisting of media relations, digital & public relations. In implementation of marketing public relations Sayurbox use only two strategies: pull strategy and pass strategy. Pull strategy is carried out through activities such as advertising in mass media, activities in digital channel and social media, consumer sales promotion such as shipping free charge, as well as implementation of marketing event such as the Harvest Party Festival. Pass strategy is done through collaboration with several other organizations and through sustainability activities to improve the company's image to customers. Meanwhile, push strategy is not implemented due to nature of business which does not involve distribution channels.

Keywords: *Marketing Public Relations, Start-up, Push Strategy, Pull Strategy, Pass Strategy*

INTRODUCTION

Rapid growth and changes in the economy and business activities, encouraging companies to face global competition causes companies to be more sensitive to competition, especially for companies engaged in a business environment that has a level of growth and development that fluctuate rapidly and dynamically. In addition, to maintain business continuity and face an increasingly competitive level of competition, every company is required to always try to make continuous improvements company activities to improve the performance of company management. The marketing sector has a very important role for the pace of the company. Each company has a marketing system with a special strategy in marketing its products according to the company's policy.

Especially considering the increasing number of companies that have sprung up by producing similar goods. Generally, entrepreneurs assume that to increase the market the main effort that must be made is to carry out massive promotions. Therefore, it is not impossible that every day we are treated to advertisements for various types of products aired through various mass media such as TV, Radio, Newspapers and even wherever we are at crossroads, in shops, at meeting places, in parking lots brochures are distributed free of charge. (Febriyani, 2020)

Nowadays, the development of the internet can have a huge impact in all aspects of life, including in business activities. The internet is widely used as the basis of information systems because the internet is the most economical median. Online shopping trends are increasing along with technological developments in this digital era, people are increasingly turning to mobile applications to fulfill their needs. Fresh fruit and vegetable start-up companies are increasingly diverse, including Sayurbox, Happyfresh, Segari, and Brambang, which can be accessed through websites and mobile applications. The area between these start-ups is in the Jabodetabek area, in line with data in (Google, 2021), where the interest score by sub-region for e-commerce Sayurbox, Happyfresh, Segari, and Brambang reached a popular point in the sub-regions of DKI Jakarta, Banten, and West Java. Shopping online has become more efficient because customers can make transactions anytime and anywhere.

The high level of competition encourages start-up companies to design more careful strategies, not only in terms of product quality but also services provided to customers (Triyanto, 2015). Improving the company's image is the key to winning the hearts of increasingly intelligent consumers. Recognition of the importance of quality goods and services has proven to be a major catalyst for building a strong reputation in the market. Marketing Public Relations (MPR) is part of the marketing strategy of a company as a liaison between the company and its consumers and the wider community through the delivery of information, programs and convincing impressions, in an effort to show that the company and its products are in accordance with the needs, desires, interests and interests of consumers. Marketing Public Relations (MPR) is a process of planning and evaluating programs that encourage customer purchases or satisfaction

through reliable information through impressions that connect companies and products that are in accordance with the desires and interests of consumers (Ruslan, 2010). Therefore, the purpose of this research is to analyze the aspects of marketing public relations, and how it is carried out by Sayurbox in maintaining existence.

LITERATURE REVIEW & THEORY

Strategy

Strategy comes from the Greek word "strategos" and refers to the overall role of military general command. However, in business terms, strategy is determining the scope and direction of an organization's development and how to achieve a competitive strategy (Chris, Rowley, & Keith, 2012), According to communication science experts (Effendy, 2013), strategy is essentially planning and management to achieve a plan. Strategy does not only function as a road map that only shows directions but must be able to show operational tactics. Strategy is a complete plan to achieve organizational goals. Effective strategy is concerned with three organizational issues: competence, scope, and resource allocation. Most companies have both a business-level strategy and a corporate-level strategy. Strategy is a game plan to achieve it. Every business must design a strategy to achieve its goals. Many of the strategies available, according to (Porter, 1991) have summarized them into three parts.

- I. An overall cost leadership strategy is a strategy that makes business units work hard to achieve the lowest production and distribution costs so that their prices can be lower than competitors and gain a large market share.
- II. Differentiation strategy is a business unit strategy that concentrates on achieving the best performance in providing benefits to customers that are considered important by the majority of the market.
- III. A focus strategy is a business unit strategy that focuses on one or more narrow market segments rather than pursuing a larger market.

According to George A. Steiner in the book (Cangara, 2013) entitled "Communication Planning and Strategy" explains that there is no generally accepted

classification or grouping of strategies. However, strategies can be classified according to their strategy dimensions, namely:

- I. Classification based on scope, strategies can be broader or narrower according to understanding.
- II. Classification based on its relationship to the organizational level, strategy based on the level of each division which has its own strategy and is a branch of the main strategy of an agency. (Cangara, 2013)
- III. Classification is based on the relationship between strategy and material or non-material sources, namely by looking at physical forms such as available human resources or management style, mindset or company philosophy.
- IV. Classification based on objectives and functions for example growth is the main goal of most companies and there are many strategies that can be chosen to ensure such growth.
- V. Classification based on the manager's personal strategy. The higher the level of the manager, the more important this strategy is for the life of the organization

Public Relations

Public relations is the backbone of PR activities, the practice of public relations is as a bridge between a company or organization and its public, especially the achievement of mutual understanding. PR practice also aims to form and maintain positive feelings and behavior of the wider community towards the company and so on. The purpose of Public Relations (PR) practice is to make the public and organizations, institutions or companies know each other, both their respective needs, interests, expectations, and culture. (Andhita Sari, 2017) the International Public Relations Association (IPRA) defines that public relations is a management function of ethical attitudes that are planned and carried out continuously by organizations, public and private institutions used to obtain and foster mutual understanding, sympathy and support from those who have a relationship and are suspected of having a relationship, by assessing their public opinion, with the aim of as far as possible with the objectives of policy and management, in order to achieve

more productive cooperation, and to meet common needs more efficiently, with planned and widespread lighting activities.

Public relations (Ruslan, 2010) is the potential to bear a tactic pull strategy (pull), is a power (power) as a provider of push strategy (encourage) and is also a pass strategy as an effort to influence or create favorable public opinion. Public relations activities are essentially communication activities. However, in contrast to other types of communication activities, communication activities in public relations have certain characteristics, due to the function, organizational nature of the institution where public relations are located and takes place, the nature of the human nature involved, especially the target public. The concept of public relations in practice is as follows:

- I. The concept of social policy, the application of social philosophy
- II. The concept of management, administration, functional
- III. Operational concept, integration concept
- IV. Ecological, environmental, relational concepts
- V. Concept of communication system, theory, communication technique, mindset.

In concept, the function of public relations when carrying out its duties and operations, whether as a communicator, mediator, or organizer, according to (Effendy, 2013) in his book, Communicological Public Relations is as follows:

- I. Support management activities in achieving organizational goals.
- II. Fostering harmonious relationships between the organization and the internal public and external public.
- III. Create two-way communication by disseminating information from the organization to the public and channeling public opinion to the organization
- IV. Serve the public and advise organizational leaders in the public interest.

According to (Nahrullah & Saputra, 2011) it is how to foster a harmonious relationship between the organization and its public, to prevent psychological obstacles, both arising from the organization and from the public. If seen from the definition above, conclusions can be drawn regarding the main function of the role of PR :

- I. As a communicator or liaison between organizations or institutions starting with the public.

- II. Building relationships, namely trying to build positive and mutually beneficial relationships with the public.
- III. The role of back up management, namely as a supporter in the management function of an organization or company.
- IV. Forming a corporate image, meaning that the role of public relations seeks to create an image for the organization or institution.

Thus, the scope of public relations work can be divided into six areas of work; Publicity, Marketing, Public Affairs, Issue Management, Lobby, and Investor Relations.

Marketing Public Relations (MPR)

The term Marketing Public Relations was first proposed by Thomas L. Harris who gave the following meaning:

“Marketing Public Relations is the process of planning and evaluating programs that encourage purchase and customers satisfying through credible and their products with need, concern of customers.”

Marketing Public Relations is the process of planning and evaluating programs that encourage customer purchases and satisfaction through communication containing reliable information and impressions that describe the company and its products according to customer needs) (Ruslan, 2010) Based on this understanding, Marketing Public Relations can be interpreted as managing communication to motivate purchases and customer satisfaction, consumers, and society). According to (Henry, 2000) suggests that Marketing Public Relations (MPR) is the community and customers, based on this opinion, marketing public relations can be interpreted as managing communication to motivate purchases, and customer and community satisfaction. Marketing public relations points to the two-way traffic of information about the product and or organization. More than conveying information marketing public relations communicates all the concepts and ideas of the organization so that in the minds of the target public develops motivation to make purchases. According to (Ruslan, 2010) suggests marketing public relations has several characteristics, as follows:

- I. Develop a positive corporate image external public or community and customers.

- II. Encourage the achievement of mutual understanding between the target public and the company.
- III. Develop synergies of marketing functions with Public Relations.
- IV. Effective in building brand recognition and brand knowledge.
- V. Support the marketing mix.

Meanwhile, according to (Henry, 2000) states that the emergence of Marketing Public Relations based on several objectives that have been stated is increasingly important with the role of several factors. these factors are:

- I. The rupture of the mass market.
- II. Blasting information and technology.
- III. Increased competition.
- IV. Advertising networks are getting less powerful.
- V. Increased advertising costs.
- VI. Suppression of promotion costs.
- VII. Reduced advertising resistance

Marketing Public Relations is the process of planning, implementing, and evaluating programs that trigger sales and customer satisfaction through the exchange of credible data and reliable impressions that connect companies and products with the needs and desires of customer attention. Thomas L. Harris (in (Ruslan, 2010)) explains that Marketing Public Relations is the process of planning and evaluating programs carried out to stimulate sales and customers by communicating credible information and impressions that can connect companies and products with the needs and concerns of consumers. Konsep marketing public relations

According to Thomas L. Harris, in general there are three strategies (Three ways strategy) for the concept of Marketing Public Relations as the embodiment of Marketing Public Relations activities in order to implement programs to achieve goals:

- I. Pull strategy (pulling) is creating demand on consumers level through advertisement and sales promotion. This is an effort to attract consumers, to use the products or services issued so that the company's goals are achieved, and

profits in marketing increase. This is used mainly to increase company's reputation in the long-term.

- II. Push strategy (push) is utilizing distribution channels to push products or service by promoting it through sales force and channel promotion. This is an effort made to increase sales figures by implementing a purchasing quantity strategy and accelerate sales through distribution channels and then channels promote it into consumer.
- III. Pass strategy (influence) is a response in rapidly changing complex market situation. This is an effort to form positive public opinion and tackle issues that may have impact to business operation through various activities, such as conducting outreach activities or participating in community activities (Ruslan, 2016)

METHODOLOGY

Researchers use a qualitative approach that is descriptive in nature. The descriptive approach is used with the aim of being able to describe data or notes that are obtained completely because of phenomena that the author encounters in the field. Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle in Emzir (2016) defined that qualitative research is a research methodology borrowed from the disciplines of sociology and anthropology which has been adapted to the world of education. The author also uses the case study method with the aim of finding the meaning of an activity which is then investigated as to what the process is like and then the results and in-depth understanding of the individual, group or situation will be obtained (Emzir, 2016). Basically, research This type of case study aims to find out about something in depth. Therefore, researchers used this method to research in depth the marketing public relations strategy at Sayurbox.

Researchers used data collection techniques by means of in-depth interviews, documentation studies, literature studies of documents and online data searches. Through in-depth interviews, direct information will be obtained which can then be accounted for. In-depth interviews can be conducted face to face, with or without following interview guidelines. Meanwhile, documentation study is a form of qualitative

data collection method by viewing or analyzing documents created by research subjects or by other people about the subject (Herdiansyah, 2014)

The object of the study is Sayurbox which is chosen based on its ability to maintain existence in the challenging market situation and other similar competitors are collapse. The research informants selected based on the purposive method. The research informants is Public Relations Manager Sayurbox. Determining the research subjects in the research was carried out using purposive sampling, Djaman Satori (2007) define purpose sampling is a sampling technique that is determined by adapting to the research objectives or certain considerations. The resource persons were chosen because they have a significant role in managing Public Relations activities as public relations managers at Sayurbox so they are expected to know in detail the marketing strategies that Sayurbox carries out.

After data collection is complete, the next step is analysis. The qualitative data analysis process according to Seiddel (1998) in Moleong (2016): (a) Taking notes produces field notes, which are coded so that the source of the data can still be traced; (b) Collect, sort, classify, synthesize, summarize and create an index, (c) Thinking, by making data categories meaningful, looking for and finding patterns and relationships, and making general findings. Data Validity Checking Technique Use of data validity separation techniques using source triangulation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Sayurbox, was founded in 2017 with the idea of supporting farmers to get a more sustainable income and how farmers can directly distribute their goods directly to customers without many middlemen. This idea was expressed in new media, namely mobile applications, and to date it has experienced many developments. In 2022, this idea got series C investment. Sayurbox transforms long, costly and inefficient distribution products from farmers to consumers which is through the middleman, to be more direct and efficient. It becomes shorter by connecting farmers with consumers and helping to market the products of these farmers so that waste also falls far from 40% to only 4% and prices become more stable.

The results suggested that in managing its marketing public relations activity, Sayurbox is adopting an differentiation strategy with an open communication approach which means open to build trust and understanding not only to customers but also to farmers partner community. This strategy is direct all function to focus on delivering their best performance while the approach functions as directions to communication and PR division and aligned with the concept of strategy (Chris, Rowley, & Keith, 2012). The strategy used is classified as objective and function strategy (Cangana, 2013) where it is used within certain function which is PR.

In the creative communication of public relation marketing, Sayurbox only implements; (i) planning developed in monthly basis always creates a timeline regarding the programs it wants to run every month. The marketing division conducts research on what people need and want to meet their needs, this gets strategic information that suits people's needs and desires; (ii) implementing the activity by organizing its communications department, Sayurbox divides it into two functions, namely external department covering social media, events, and campaigns which are controlled by the marketing division and internal department responsible for government relations and community which are carried out by the corporate and support team. Internal communications will be carried out by the Public Relations division; (iii) then carry out program evaluations at weekly & monthly meetings as supervision and monitoring of the program. Internally, it starts from formal and informal meetings. For the external public, it is adjusted to the target audience.

Sayurbox has mixed some marketing public relation activities in facing competition to maintain its existence, attract the interest of potential buyers in marketing its products and carry out its external functions. The following is a chart of Sayurbox's marketing public relations strategy.

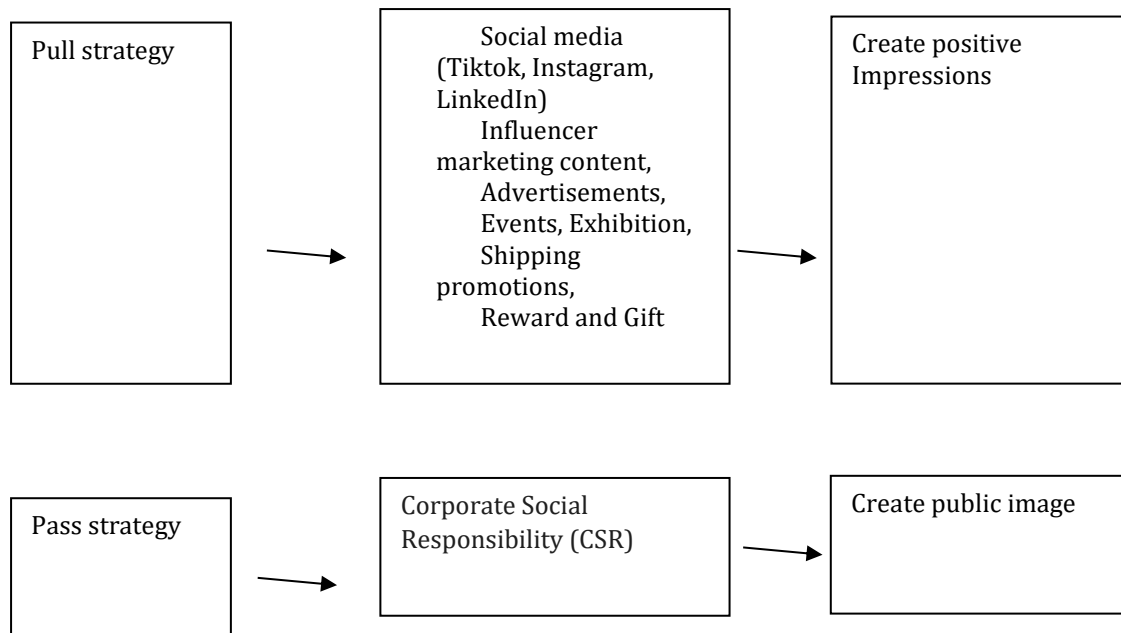


Figure.1 Sayurbox Marketing Public Relations Strategy

There are two tactics in the marketing public relations undergone by Sayurbox to achieve its goals: firstly, pull strategy and secondly, pass strategy. Another strategy is not used by Sayurbox which is push strategy. It is driven by the nature of the business operation where Sayurbox markets its product directly to the end consumers without involving distribution channel partners.

Pull Strategy

The strategy most often used by Sayurbox is creating marketing content through Website and social media such as, Instagram, Linked in and Tiktok. The strategy used by Sayurbox is to approach directly through events to target new customers and increase the existence of Sayurbox. Therefore, the event is an important thing to introduce Sayurbox to the wider community so that it gives a positive impression in people's minds.

Establishing relationships with the media is very necessary as well as releasing press reports regarding the success of programs that have been carried out either through social media, applications, websites, or mass media. Because Sayurbox needs help from

other media to expand the existence. This means that Sayurbox provides informations as needed by the stakeholders. Sayurbox, in promoting events or promos, always invites media, KOLs and other brands so that the event becomes bigger. Sayurbox must collaborate with the mass media.in building brand awareness. This will make Sayurbox easy to recognize just by looking at the logo, tag line or color that characterizes it. Sayurbox collaborates with radio, television or print media to increase sales easily. A person who runs marketing public relations must establish relationships with external parties. In carrying out its communications, the PR Division has a timeline regarding press releases related to themes or topics, for example corporate news or collaboration with farmers and so on. Therefore, establishing relationships with the media can provide value or satisfaction for customers.

In term of consumer promotion, Sayurbox is usually implementing promotion in term of price reduction and the delivery fee surcharge. It also has a lucky draw promotion by giving attractive Umrah prizes and merchandise to attract consumers. Every month Sayurbox will have awards or prizes for loyal customers who have joined in the mobile application as loyalty program. These prizes provide benefits for customers, they get rewards in the form of shopping vouchers, cooking utensil packages, fresh vegetable packages and so on. This is one of the ways Sayurbox to attract consumers to keep loyal purchasing. This finding also strengthens previous research by Tomohardjo, et. al (2023) in which mix of consumes sales promotion is able to increase the interest to purchase the offered products and increase sales and at the end supporting the company to maintain its reputation.

Pass Strategy (Influencing)

This pass strategy is a form of marketing public relations for Sayurbox in influencing favorable public opinion. Even though it is not easy to read what the public needs or wants, Sayurbox remains consistent in making innovations in its marketing. On every occasion, Sayurbox always carries out CSR activities for the community, one of which is through activities with the community such as donating semi-waste products to the Lembang Zoo and Safari Park, making organic fertilizer for farmers and food cycling which

is then distributed to less fortunate communities. Every time Sayurbox holds promotional activities at an event, the community is guaranteed to be invited. Because collaboration with the community is very profitable for Sayurbox. The community of course has its say.

CONCLUSION

The strategy used by Sayurbox to increase its existence is with a differentiation strategy that unit business concentrates on achieving the best performance in providing benefits to customers that are considered important by most of the market. This strategy is implemented by using open communication approach. Based on the results of the analysis, the MPR strategy used by Sayurbox is only two type pull and pass strategies lined out below:

- 1) Sayurbox's pull marketing strategy provides information about products to the public, using social media such as LinkedIn for dissemination through applications, websites, print media, electronics and new media (social media) Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn, advertising, promotional activities through special events. By collaborating with other media, KOL, other brands, the events or promotions carried out by Sayurbox become bigger. The delivery of information becomes wider. Sayurbox also carries out open communication with the public regarding issues currently being experienced, of course this makes people aware of the existence of Sayurbox. Moreover, Sayurbox also provides consumer promotion and loyalty program by giving gifts or rewards to customers who have loyally joined in the form of discounts, shopping vouchers, cooking utensil packages, and fresh vegetable packages.
- 2) Sayurbox marketing pass strategy is by carrying out CSR activities every year by providing vegetables to the Lembang Zoo and Safari Park. Collaborating with communities to make organic fertilizer which is then distributed to farmers and CSR food cycle activities which are then given to underprivileged communities. This is in accordance with the vision and mission of Sayurbox. So that it can build loyalty, improve and introduce Sayurbox to the wider community.

Push strategy is not applied by Sayurbox as it has business operation model that connects directly to end consumers without dealing with distribution channel partners.

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