

# ***PUBLIC RELATION'S STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION OF TELKOM UNIVERSITY USING INTERNET- BASED TECHNOLOGY TO ATTRACT TELKOM EDUCATION USERS IN BANDUNG***

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***Abstract***— Tough competition in order to achieve potential students in university starts from the period when prospective students are studying in their senior high school. To fulfill the goal, a university should apply the right strategy to push its marketing success. Telkom University, one of the finest private universities in Indonesia, has experienced this circumstance. This research is aimed to investigating the implementation of public relations strategic communication of Telkom University using Internet- based technology. It seeks to explore the influence of its implementation toward Telkom education service users in Bandung city. The study applied quantitative descriptive method. The sample of this study was taken from people who live in Bandung City. Findings of the study show that there is a significant correlation between communication strategy of Telkom university public relation and its corporate image change.

***Keywords:*** communication strategy, education service, public relations, telkom university preliminary

## I. INTRODUCTION

Private universities (PTS) in Indonesia continue to grow bigger and their number is larger than State Universities (PTN). According to the Association of Indonesian Private Universities (APTISI), the number of private universities in Indonesia has reached more than 3,068, equal to 97% of the total number of Indonesian higher education institutions. This statistic has led students. PTS has started to attract future students since they are studying in senior high school. In response to this challenging situation, PTS should

implement the most effective marketing strategy that will increase the quality and quantity of their strategic communication to improve their brand image. Telkom University as a member of APTISI deals with this challenging situation. Historically it was inaugurated on August 14, 2013 by the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, Prof. Dr. Ir. Muhammad Nuh, DEA. It is organized by Telkom Education Foundation (YPT) and located in Bandung Technoplex area. It has got famous for branding strategy since it is closely associated with Telkom. It strives to be good PTS and to gain reputable brand through continuous effort like professional management, responsibility and integrity. Those efforts will create good institutional brand and image among Indonesian society.

These conditions will certainly provide benefits for Telkom University in implementing strategic communication through the internet use, in order to attract prospective students. This circumstance has served as background of this study. Therefore this study seeks to explore Public relation's Strategic communication of Telkom University which is based on Internet Technology to deals with Telkom Education service users in Bandung, and to investigate its influence to society in the city.

## II. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

### Public Relations

Wilcox and Cameron (2006, p.5) define public relation as follows:

*“public relations is a management function, of a continuing and planned character, through which public and private organizations and institutions seek to win and retain the understanding, sympathy, and support of those with whom there are or maybe concerned by evaluating public opinion about themselves, in order to correlate, as far as possible their own policies and procedures, to achieve by planned and widespread information more productive corporation and more efficient fulfillment of their common interests”.*

Based on the definition above it can be concluded that public relation has something to do with an effort to win and retain public understanding, sympathy and support toward their organization. The efforts include well-planned and organized information sharing activity.

### Marketing communication as a part of Public Relation strategy

Keller (2008: 56) states that the strength of images depend on the number of the quantity and the quality of the information received by the consumer. The more the consumers receive the brand information, the stronger they associate the brand information and the image. There are two factors influencing strengthness of image namely personal relationships of the information brand and the consistency of brand information.

Corporate identity can be expressed in several patterns of communication, behavior, and symbols (Riel & Fombrun, 2007). This is to say that coporate identity is represented by several attributes relating to a particular corporate. In line with this, Idianto (2011: 60) explains that a corporate identity has four basic elements namely:

(1) name of an organization; (2) a logo form, (3) type of letter, and (4) color type. These four elements shape coporate brand image.

### Mapping Public Opinion and Education Service Users

Opinion formation process covers an illustration concerning a person who is influenced by various factors like: cultural background, past experiences, shared values and trending news. These factors eventually shape public opinion because the process that is undergoing will create a person stance and interpretation. Finally it leads to public opinion formation (Ruslan, 2014: 68). According to D.W RajECKi (1982) in his book entitled *Attitude, Theme and Advances*, there are factors that can shape public opinion. Those factors have three main components known as ABCs of attitude. Component A: *Affect*. This component relates to pleasure, like, affection, fear, hatred, sadness, pride, exhaustion that occur as a response to something after people sees and listens to it. These affective component serve to evaluate something based on a person's emotive feelings (emotional aspect). This evaluation comes in a form of assessment of "good or bad".

Second Component is B: *Behavior*. This component occurs in several forms such as to hit, destroy, accept, reject, take, buy, etc. It serves as an active source for a person to actively move an action, behave, for a circumstance that one is facing.

Last Component is C: *Cognition*. This component deals with the reasoning of a person. It functions to judge information, a message, a fact and an understanding that are related to his or her position. It produces either a person's assessment or understanding based on his rationality and reasoning ability. Therefore it is closely associated with person's intellectuality related to science. (Ruslan, 2014: 68-69)

## III. METHOD AND RESEARCH DESIGN

This study applied a quantitative descriptive. This method is used to explain the characteristics of a group of people, an object, a set of conditions, a system of thought or a class of events in the present (Sekaran, 2006, p.158). To achieve the objectives of the research, measurement is implemented on the public relations strategic communication of Telkom University in using internet-based technology. This study is dynamic in nature since it follows the result of questionnaires, interviews and observation for data collection.

## IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study employs some variables. Variables X refers to the Corporate Image which is assessed through five indicators such as acceptability, availability, uniqueness, credibility and conformity. To investigate participants' respons, these indicators are formulated into the form of statements written in the questionnaire. There are 200 respondents answered the questionnaire. In this research we showed only part of the research findings. The most important is about the image that of Telkom university showed in their web site. The results of the respondents' responses toward the corporate image of Telkom University are as follows:

### *Strength Of Image Variable Recognition Indicator*

Based on descriptive analysis, the findings of sub variable concerning strength of image especially recognition indicator is as follows: based on data gathered, there are 79.9% of respondents often saw the name of Telkom University in various internet media such as social media, web, and blog. On the other hand there are 66.6% of people often saw the corporate name of Telkom University in various outdoor media such as banners, brochures, and posters. Both conditions are also supported by other strategies which also account for 62.2% respondents who saw promotion of Telkom University in some exhibitions or other promotional activities. Based on the results of those three statements, the recognition indicator got a percentage of 69.56%. In line with the percentage interpretation

category set in this study, the recognition indicator belongs to good category. In other words Telkom University is deemed familiar among respondents based on the public relation strategic communication using internet technology.

### **Preference Indicator**

Based on the above data, there are 87.4% of respondents believed that the name of Telkom University would bring a good change. This is in line with the number of 89.8% respondents who believed that Telkom University would provide international education quality as they promised. Based on the result of data, the preference achieved a percentage of 88.6%. In accordance with the percentage interpretation category in this study, the preference indicator falls within very good category. It implies that Telkom University is a choice that public would make for their university option.

### **Insistence Indicator**

Based on descriptive analysis, this study found the result of insistence is as follows: based on the results of the insistence indicator, it can be seen that there are 82.5% of respondents would choose Telkom University as their learning institution. Other findings show that there are 67.5% of respondents who would recommend Telkom University as a right choice to others. Based on the results of these two statements, the insistence indicator gets 75%. In accordance with the percentage interpretation category in this study, the insistence indicator in the sub variable strength of image is deemed in good category. This means Telkom University has gained public trust so that the public will choose it compared to other universities.

### **Linear Regression Analysis**

Regression analysis refers to an analysis used to predict how the condition (ups and downs) of the dependent variable, if two or more independent variables as a predictor factors show its increase and decrease value (Sugiyono, 2010: 275). In this study, multiple regression analysis is aimed at investigating the influence of internet usage with several indicators namely: acceptance, availability, uniqueness, credibility and suitability toward corporate image of Telkom University among Bandung society. The goal is to predict or estimate the value of the dependent variable in cause relationship. Based on the result of regression analysis, it can be seen that the uniqueness indicator on renaming variable has the biggest influence, that is 44,7% toward corporate image of Telkom university variable. In accordance with the level of interpretation of the value of r, then the value is considered in strong enough category. To determine how big the influence is given by variable X to variable Y, this study applies coefficient determination analysis. The result is as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} CD &= r^2 \times 100\% \\ &= (0,582)^2 \times 100\% \\ &= 33,87\% \end{aligned}$$

From the above analysis, it can be seen that Telkom University renaming variable which consists of several indicators: acceptance, availability, uniqueness, credibility and conformity, have shown influence to corporate image variable. The number is equal to 33,87%, while the rest equals to 66,13% which is influenced by other factor not observed in this study. Factors that are not studied in this study namely rebranding. It has three elements : repositioning, redesign and relaunch. The remaining result which reached 66.13% can be divided into three elements. Each element has a value of 22%. Therefore it can be concluded that the renaming element has greater influence compared with other elements in rebranding. It can be concluded that brand or company name is a very important thing to note, because the name is an early indicator in a corporate brand image.

In the same vein, Muzellec (2006) explains that brand name plays pivotal role as an identifier of a corporate. Based on the three results of the analysis of the minor hypothesis discussed earlier, the major hypothesis which states that there is an influence of renaming effort of Telkom University toward corporate image of Telkom University among Bandung community, is acceptable. Knapp (2004: 122) explains that an effective brand name encourages the process of both building value or strengthening the brand name itself. Effective names are the first effort that corporate use to create specific positive impression. Corporate name is aimed at not only communicating but also positioning a corporate brand image. In a nutshell names are paramount to corporate because it plays a role as a "big switch device that activates a corporate image in the minds of audiences" (Shimp, 2003: 299). Based on regression analysis result, the variable of renaming has an influence toward Telkom university image variable with 33,8 per cent. The uniqueness indicator in the variable of renaming had the biggest partial influence accounting 47,7 per cent. According to the level of interpretation of value of r, the value belongs to **strong enough** category. Based on the result of this study, it can be concluded that the better the corporate brand name of Telkom University the higher the positive corporate image of Telkom University. Conversely, if corporate name of Telkom University is perceived negatively by society, the corporate image of Telkom University will degrades.

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