

Public Relations Strategies In Building Brand Awareness At CV. Borong Persada

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Abstract.

Public relations strategy is a program plan or steps that play a major role in building Brand awareness. CV Borong Persada is a company engaged in the field of construction and procurement of goods and services. Its main focus is to cooperate with various government agencies related to the procurement of goods and services. This study aims to determine and obtain a descriptive picture of Public relations strategies in building Brand awareness. This research uses the concept of Public relations mix strategy from the development of Thomas L. Harris, namely the Public relations mix strategy consisting of PENCILS components. Information collection techniques are in-depth interviews, observations, literature studies and other data sources. Using the post-positivist paradigm and descriptive qualitative approach, the results showed that CV Borong Persada successfully implemented PENCILS and received a positive response from the public, but there needs to be a more presentative and planned Public relations strategy in order to gain greater power and increase Brand awareness of this company. This study contributes to the existing knowledge on Public relations and Brand awareness, as well as providing practical insights for organizations looking to improve their brand reputation.

Keywords: Public Relations Strategy; Brand Awareness; PENCILS Theory; Goods and Services Procurement.

I. INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly competitive era of globalization, companies are required to not only offer quality products or services, but also to build strong brand awareness among consumers. Brand awareness is one of the key elements in marketing strategies that can influence consumer purchasing decisions. Increased brand awareness can create consumer loyalty, which in turn will contribute to the company's profitability (As'ad, 2020). Therefore, it is important for companies to implement effective marketing communication strategies, including public relations, to build and increase their brand awareness. Public relations (PR) plays an important role in building a positive image and brand awareness among the public. In this context, research shows that the implementation of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC), which includes PR, advertising, and sales promotions, can significantly influence brand awareness (Dinyah Fitri & Herdiansyah, 2021). By utilizing a variety of consistent communication tools, companies can reach a wider audience and build stronger relationships with consumers. This is particularly relevant for companies such as CV. Borong Persada, which operates in an increasingly competitive market and requires innovative strategies to attract consumers. In addition, research shows that good PR planning can help institutions build their brands, especially in certain situations (Iman Cahyanto et al., 2022; Putri et al., 2024). In this context, companies need to adapt to changes in consumer behavior and utilize digital platforms to convey their messages. Effective public relations strategies not only help in building brand awareness but also in maintaining the company's relevance in an ever-changing market.

Research by Yanti shows that the use of influencers on social media can be an effective marketing tactic in building brand awareness (Yanti & Sulhan, 2023). In an increasingly connected world, companies can leverage the power of social media to reach a wider audience and build closer relationships with consumers. This shows that PR strategies involving social media and influencers can have a significant impact on brand awareness and company image. In the context of CV. Borong Persada, it is important to understand how the right PR strategy can be implemented to build strong brand awareness. Research emphasizes the importance of brand equity management in a competitive environment (Karmeli & Haryadi, 2019; Mourad et al., 2011; Widiana et al., 2015). By identifying the factors that influence brand equity, companies can formulate more effective strategies to increase brand awareness and consumer loyalty. CV. Borong Persada is a company engaged in construction and the procurement of goods and services, which has

built a good reputation for providing high-quality services. Since its establishment, the company has demonstrated its commitment to providing the best solutions to meet infrastructure development needs, both for the public and private sectors.

One of CV. Borong Persada's main focuses is to collaborate with various government agencies in providing goods and services procurement services. This cooperation is an important aspect of the company's growth, considering that government projects often involve large-scale procurement that requires a high level of accountability and professionalism. Procurement is related to the use of inputs used in the company's value chain, including raw materials, supplies, and other assets (Arifin & Haryani, 2015; Triono, 2020). In these procurement projects, CV. Borong Persada serves as a partner that provides building materials, construction equipment, and contractor services in accordance with quality standards and government regulations. To ensure the success of each project, the company implements a transparent and efficient work process, from the planning stage to implementation. The company also prioritizes the principles of Good Corporate Governance (GCG) in every aspect of its operations in order to maintain the trust of the parties involved, especially government agencies as its main partners. CV. Borong Persada has adapted to various mechanisms implemented by the government, including the use of the E-Catalog system. E-Catalog is a component of the Electronic Procurement Service (LPSE) system used by the Indonesian government to facilitate the procurement of goods and services. Through E-Catalog, the government can purchase goods and services directly from registered providers, making the procurement process faster, more efficient, and more transparent (Iqbal, 2020; Kristianto, 2022).

Participating in the E-Catalog provides greater visibility for CV. Borong Persada among government agencies, strengthening the company's brand awareness as a reliable and high-quality provider. In the context of cooperation with the government, brand awareness is an important element that influences the success of a company. Brand awareness includes the extent to which the public understands the brand and how stakeholders, including government agencies, business partners, and the community, understand the reputation and value brought by CV. Borong Persada. Strong brand recognition is needed, especially in the public procurement sector, where credibility and trust are key factors in winning large projects and tenders. As a company that is often involved in government procurement projects, CV. Borong Persada understands the importance of building a positive and trustworthy brand image. By providing consistent solutions, maintaining good relations with the government, and prioritizing professionalism, the company can increase brand awareness among key audiences. CV. Borong Persada implements an integrated public relations (PR) strategy to build a positive image and increase brand awareness among government agencies and the public. The company utilizes social media to interact with audiences, share content, and visually showcase its project portfolio (Sartika & Rachmat, 2023). Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs are also implemented to demonstrate the company's commitment to the surrounding community and strengthen its positive image in the public eye. Crisis management is a focus, with the company responding to issues quickly and transparently to maintain its reputation. With this approach, CV. Borong Persada has succeeded in increasing its visibility and trust as a reliable partner in the procurement of goods and services.

Through a targeted PR strategy, CV. Borong Persada not only focuses on operational management and project results, but also strengthens communication and interaction with the public and government. Strategies that support business development, including building brand awareness, are very important for creating a positive perception and increasing the company's opportunities in the goods and services procurement industry (Nastiti & Supranata, 2020). The PENCILS theory developed by Thomas L. Harris emphasizes the importance of consistent communication and interaction with the right stakeholders, which can be adapted to strengthen the image of CV. Borong Persada in the goods and services procurement market. Previous research shows that public relations (PR) strategies play an important role in building brand awareness, which in turn can increase consumer loyalty and purchase intent. In this context, Razak et al. explain that brand awareness serves as a predictor of repurchase intent, where attitude toward the brand acts as a moderator in this relationship (Razak et al., 2019). This study emphasizes the importance of building strong brand awareness to create goodwill among consumers and stakeholders, which is particularly relevant for companies such as CV. Borong Persada that are seeking to increase their brand visibility in a competitive

market. Other research shows that the implementation of integrated marketing communication (IMC), which includes PR, advertising, and sales promotions, can significantly influence brand awareness (Dinyah Fitri & Herdiansyah, 2021). This research highlights the importance of consistency in the messages conveyed through various communication channels to build effective brand awareness. In the context of CV. Borong Persada, an integrated PR strategy can help create a positive brand image and increase brand recognition among consumers. PR plays an important role in building branding, especially in crisis situations (Iman Cahyanto et al., 2022).

This study shows that PR can be an effective tool for communicating brand values and maintaining relationships with audiences, which is very important for companies that want to remain relevant and memorable to consumers. In this case, CV. Borong Persada can utilize PR strategies to maintain good communication with customers and stakeholders during difficult times. In addition, other studies show that high brand awareness can increase consumer trust in products, which in turn contributes to brand loyalty (Damayanti & Puspita, 2023). This shows that efforts to increase brand awareness through PR not only have an impact on brand recognition but also on strengthening the emotional relationship between the brand and consumers. Thus, CV. Borong Persada needs to focus on PR strategies that not only increase brand awareness but also build trust and loyalty among consumers. Brand engagement through sponsorship can increase brand awareness among a wider audience (Dixon et al., 2018; Santika et al., 2024). This research shows that active and strategic brand engagement can create better brand recognition, which is highly relevant for CV. Borong Persada in designing PR campaigns that involve local communities and events to increase its brand visibility. Considering all this research, it is clear that effective PR strategies can play a key role in building brand awareness for CV. Borong Persada. Through an integrated and consistent approach, the company can increase brand recognition, build trust, and ultimately drive greater consumer loyalty. Overall, building brand awareness through effective PR strategies is an important step for companies to achieve long-term success. By utilizing various communication tools and understanding market dynamics, CV. Borong Persada can increase their brand visibility and build stronger relationships with consumers. This study aims to explore PR strategies that can be implemented by CV. Borong Persada in an effort to build better brand awareness among consumers.

II. METHODS

This research is qualitative in nature (Sutopo et al., 2018). The research methods used in this study include several important elements, namely the type of research, the subject or object of research, data collection techniques, data analysis, and data validity (Hardani, 2020). The paradigm adopted is post-positivism (Sugiyono, 2019), which allows researchers to analyze emerging phenomena to understand the public relations strategies implemented by CV. Borong Persada in building brand awareness. The approach taken is a qualitative method, which produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from individuals and observable behavior. The subjects of this study are those involved in public relations activities at CV. Borong Persada, including managers, PR staff, and the company's target audience. Data collection techniques were carried out through in-depth interviews, direct observation, and analysis of related documents. The interviews aimed to obtain subjective views and experiences from informants, while direct observation allowed researchers to observe PR interactions and practices in a natural context (Sinta, 2020).

Data analysis was conducted using a descriptive qualitative approach, in which the data obtained was not presented in the form of numbers or statistics, but rather in narratives, images, or behaviors (Gunawan, 2016). The analysis process involves five important steps: first, organizing data from various sources; second, creating categories based on subjects or patterns that emerge; third, seeking alternative explanations for the phenomena being studied; fourth, writing clear and accurate reports; and fifth, defining key terms and presenting data systematically. The validity of the data is ensured through triangulation, which is comparing data obtained from various sources and data collection techniques. In this way, researchers can ensure that the information presented is accurate and accountable. Through this systematic research method, it is hoped that the research can provide an in-depth description of CV. Borong Persada's public relations strategy in building effective brand awareness.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of PENCILS Public Relations Strategy

The company reacts quickly and effectively to customer needs, market changes, and other external factors. Its responsiveness is agile and allows it to adjust its strategy in a timely manner. Based on this, the researcher attempted to examine the public relations strategy using seven strategies from the PENCILS component, including publications, events, news, community involvement, information/image, lobbying & negotiating, and social responsibility.

A. Publications Strategy

In the context of CV. Borong Persada, publications about the company's products, services, and achievements can be used to increase customer trust. CV Borong Persada's publications are distributed through Instagram and its E-Catalog website. CV Borong Persada posts news about the company's activities or achievements on Instagram and its E-Catalog. For example, CV Borong Persada participated in an event on the procurement of goods and services and a seminar on the scope of procurement of goods and services conducted by CV Borong. This post was shared on Instagram with pictures and a brief story about the event. Content related to company activities can help build brand awareness. CV Borong Persada can share tips or insights from seminars or training sessions, then post them on Instagram. This can take the form of articles, videos, or infographics that show the company's concern for consumer education.

By consistently implementing the PENCILS strategy on Instagram, CV Borong Persada not only builds brand awareness but also demonstrates their commitment to quality, service, and social responsibility. This will strengthen the company's relationship with its audience and enhance its overall brand image. CV Borong Persada consistently builds brand awareness through the PENCILS Publications strategy on Instagram. By using Instagram to introduce various activities and programs that have been carried out, the company reaches a wider audience while highlighting activities such as community training through webinars in collaboration with relevant sources regarding the procurement of goods and services.

B. Events Strategy

CV Borong Persada uses the PENCILS Events strategy to build brand awareness through seminars held in collaboration with goods and services procurement parties. In these seminars, CV Borong Persada allocates a budget for Paid or Free Events to intensively promote the event through webinars or collaborative projects in line with the procurement of goods and services. With strong promotion, they ensure that the event reaches a wide audience, including professionals and decision makers in the construction and procurement sectors. CV Borong Persada shares testimonials from participants and partners who appreciate the quality of this event on their platform, on Instagram. These testimonials build the company's credibility in the eyes of potential partners and the public. Interactive Events are presented through interactive question and answer sessions during seminars that engage participants in discussions and provide valuable feedback. Through Social Events, Borong Persada demonstrates its commitment to social responsibility by donating building materials for social projects raised in these seminars.

The PENCILS Events strategy implemented by CV. Borong Persada provides a number of significant benefits in building the company's brand awareness. Through this strategy, Borong Persada can take advantage of various types of events, such as seminars, collaborations with communities, and training, to introduce their brand directly to their target audience. For example, in collaboration with goods and services procurement parties or communities such as UMKM FnB and Muslimah Sidoarjo, CV. Borong Persada not only introduces its products and services, but also showcases the company's social values. For example, with the events held, event promotions become more widespread and reach new audiences, while testimonials in Earned Events increase brand credibility. This strategy also makes it easier for the company to connect with local communities through Local Events and demonstrate its social commitment through Social Events. All of these approaches strengthen CV. Borong Persada's brand awareness in the public eye and help build deeper relationships with customers and business partners, making the brand more recognizable and respected in the industry. With a comprehensive PENCILS Events strategy, CV. Borong Persada not only strengthens brand awareness, but also builds a reputation as a professional partner that cares

about industry education, quality, and social responsibility, thereby creating stronger relationships with the community and partners in the goods and services procurement sector.

C. News Strategy

The PENCILS News used by CV. Borong Persada has not yet achieved full effectiveness in building brand awareness, especially through news publications. Currently, the company's news coverage is largely limited to media broadcasts that only highlight one aspect, namely its collaboration with the Muslimah Sidoarjo community. This collaboration is only a non-formal activity to build closer relations between CV. Borong Persada and the surrounding community, especially the Muslimah Sidoarjo community, with the aim of increasing the surrounding community's knowledge about CV. Borong Persada in the field of goods and services procurement. Although this media broadcast has helped to introduce the company's social initiatives, the approach is still limited and has not been able to reach a wider audience. To truly build strong bonds with the community and gain a positive image in the public eye, CV. Borong Persada needs to expand its publication channels and formats. In order to make the PENCILS News strategy more effective, CV. Borong Persada can utilize various publication platforms to convey its news and social activities. In addition to media broadcasts, the company can publish in-depth news articles on their E-Catalog website, which not only explain the objectives of the collaboration with Muslimah Sidoarjo but also provide a real picture of the positive impact of this program on participants. For example, the company can feature inspiring stories from training participants who have benefited from these activities, which can highlight the company's positive values and bring them closer to the community.

In addition, CV Borong Persada can optimize social media such as Instagram and LinkedIn to display documentary visual content from each collaborative activity. These posts can use special hashtags to reach a wider local community and give the impression that the company is committed to developing the region. Using Instagram Stories or Reels to showcase these activities can add an interactive touch, helping the audience feel closer to the company's social activities. By expanding its publication channels and enriching its news formats, CV. Borong Persada can maximize its efforts to build a positive image as a company that cares about empowering the surrounding community and fostering good relations with the public. The importance of PR in CV. Procurement of Goods and Services can be seen from its role in maintaining relationships with the media. The mass media, both traditional and digital, has an influence in shaping public opinion in news strategies. Therefore, good relationships with journalists or influencers can help the company to get positive coverage, which in turn can increase visibility and introduce CV. Procurement of Goods and Services to a wider audience. For example, by providing accurate information about the success of major projects, efficient procurement, or innovation in the procurement process, this CV can highlight its competence in the industry.

D. Community Involvement Strategy

The community involvement strategy that the researcher found at CV. Borong Persada, namely joining the local MSME community, establishing partnerships with the goods and services provider community, and supporting sports activities such as badminton, demonstrates a comprehensive approach to building relationships and a positive image in the community. CV. Borong Persada's participation in the local MSME community indicates the company's awareness of the importance of collaboration in building the local economy. By joining this community, the company not only supports the growth of MSMEs but also opens up opportunities for mutually beneficial business cooperation and collaboration in various fields. Involvement in this community can help CV. Borong Persada strengthen its business network, expand market access, and solidify its position as a goods and services procurement company. CV. Borong Persada also joins a community of goods and services providers, enabling the exchange of information, best practices, and adaptation to developing industrial technologies.

This is very important for maintaining the company's competitiveness and improving its capabilities in providing optimal services, especially to government agencies. Communication within the community takes place through a WhatsApp group for discussion and sharing of information on the procurement of goods and services. The company's presence in this community reflects its professionalism and commitment to advancing the goods and services industry. In addition, CV. Borong Persada also frequently sponsors

sports activities, such as the Commit Badminton Community, which holds regular monthly tournaments. This demonstrates the company's commitment to supporting a healthy and active lifestyle among the community. It is also an effective means of increasing the company's visibility and building brand awareness. Support for sports reflects the company's social awareness, which strengthens the emotional bond between the company and the surrounding community. CV. Borong Persada's community involvement strategy creates positive synergy, not only increasing the company's visibility but also strengthening its position as an entity that cares for and supports community and local economic development.

E. Information/Image Strategy

The next step is the information/image strategy, which emphasizes the importance of the image and information conveyed by the company. This step is one of the efforts made by CV. Borong Persada to inform or achieve a certain company image. In this strategy, the company must maintain the information communicated to the public so that the image formed is in line with the values and quality it wants to show to its stakeholders.

“Actually, when it comes to building a company's image, especially for me as a marketer, one of the main aspects is establishing good communication and relationships with stakeholders because this has a long-term impact. If our communication with them is good, then the image of our company will also be positive.” (LEP, 2024).

This statement underlines the importance of good communication and relationships with stakeholders as an effort to build a positive long-term image. This statement is relevant to the “inform” element in the PENCILS strategy, where good communication with stakeholders creates positive information and can strengthen the company's image.

“Secondly, when there is a procurement project, we try as much as possible to maintain the quality of the goods and services we provide to the government so that our information and image can be recognized as one of the companies that provides quality goods and services, and if later it will be passed on by word of mouth by stakeholders.” (LEP, 2024).

In addition, CV. Borong Persada's marketing also emphasizes the importance of maintaining the quality of goods and services so that the company's image remains high-quality and is maintained in the eyes of the government and other stakeholders. This is related to the “image” element in Harris' theory, where product and service quality contributes to a positive perception that can ultimately spread through word of mouth. PR also plays a role in crisis management. CV. Borong Persada in the procurement of goods and services, challenges and problems often arise, ranging from delays in delivery, quality issues, to issues related to regulatory compliance. PR serves to manage communication in these crisis situations by providing clear and transparent explanations to the public to minimize the negative impact on the image of CV. Borong Persada. Openness and accuracy in providing information to stakeholders when problems arise are key to maintaining client trust and loyalty.

F. Lobbying & Negotiating Strategies

Public relations activities are inseparable from lobbying and negotiating. In this context, lobbying and negotiating refer to company activities to build direct relationships with agencies or the government through a negotiation process in order to influence purchasing decisions and strengthen partnerships.

“Perhaps this is one of the most effective PR strategies to implement in my company. Lobbying involves negotiating with agencies or the government to offer goods or services. In our terminology, this is called door-to-door. We visit government or private agencies with our company profile and offers of goods/services.” (DZ, 2024)

DZ's statement shows that the company actively approaches potential clients in government agencies and private institutions. The door-to-door strategy mentioned is a direct approach, where the company seeks to build personal relationships with clients through face-to-face meetings, by presenting the company profile and the products/services offered. This confirms that the lobbying strategy used by DZ aims to provide information directly and build trust through interaction.

“For example, we go to government agencies, school principals. Then we ask them what they need, and we give them brochures and offer letters. Finally, there is a negotiation. In addition, we also use a

casting net method, sending company profiles, brochures, and offers to 100 agency emails or sharing them via WhatsApp to stakeholders.” (DZ, 2024)

DZ also mentioned the “casting a net” method, which involves sending company profiles and offer brochures via email and WhatsApp to various agencies. This strategy allows the company to reach more parties and open up new opportunities in various agencies. From the perspective of lobbying and negotiating in Harris' theory, this activity shows that companies do not only focus on price and quality negotiations, but also on creating strategic relationships that strengthen the company's image. The PR strategy at CV. Borong Persada also involves efforts to create more personal relationships with stakeholders through various communication channels such as WhatsApp and email marketing, as explained earlier, as well as through face-to-face meetings. By understanding their clients more deeply, goods and services procurement companies can develop more relevant and interesting messages, which in turn can increase engagement and satisfaction.

G. Social Responsibility Strategy

The aspect of social responsibility is quite important in the role of public relations in a company, where the company does not only focus on economic profits, but is also sensitive to economic, environmental, and social issues and shows its concern for the community in order to gain public sympathy. A good relationship between the company and the public will create benefits for the company's image.

“Perhaps from my point of view, because we are distributors... So when there is a request from the government, we sometimes use local suppliers. This is because government procurement goods must be TKDN-certified, which means that the products must be made in Indonesia.” (LEP, 2024).

According to LEP's statement, by prioritizing TKDN-certified goods, companies not only comply with government regulations but also support the domestic industry. This is a form of social responsibility, where companies play an active role in strengthening the local and national economy.

“Because we are based in Sidoarjo, the products we offer must have TKDN certification, and we usually source them from local MSMEs in Sidoarjo, such as food and beverage products, furniture craftsmen, school teaching aids, and other products. Ultimately, entrepreneurs in Sidoarjo also participate indirectly in these procurement projects.” (LEP, 2024).

Respondents stated that they collaborate with local MSMEs in Sidoarjo, such as food and beverage products, furniture, and school teaching aids. LEP also emphasized the positive impact of involving local MSMEs. By supporting local MSMEs, companies build an image as entities that care about the community and contribute to regional economic development. It also provides opportunities for SMEs or local suppliers to participate in the procurement process to support local economic growth. Based on the results of interviews conducted by researchers with the director and marketing staff of CV. Borong Persada, researchers also sought information on which strategies were most effective. Of the seven components of the PENCILS strategy proposed by Thomas L Harris, data shows that the components that the company believes play the biggest role in increasing brand awareness are events, community involvement, and lobbying & negotiating. This is evidenced by the following statement:

“Of the seven strategies, I think it's events, community involvement, and lobbying & negotiating. Because I think those two strategies have a big impact and play a big role for the company.” (DZ, 2024).

The events strategy provides a platform for companies to interact directly with their target audience. Through various events such as seminars and webinars, companies not only introduce their products and services but also showcase their social values. In terms of community involvement, engaging with the community not only expands the company's network but also demonstrates its dedication to supporting a community. Sponsorship in sports communities, such as badminton communities, shows the company's support for an active lifestyle among the community. And finally, lobbying & negotiating is a very effective PR strategy in strengthening partnerships, especially with government and private agencies. The door-to-door lobbying strategy of distributing brochures, offers, and company profiles expands the company's reach and facilitates communication with potential clients. Not only that, this strategy can also create long-term personal relationships that can strengthen the company's image. The Impact of Public Relations Strategies based on the PENCILS Theory

Based on the public relations strategies implemented by CV. Borong Persada above, there has certainly been an impact on brand awareness, leading to successful sales transactions. As stated by the source, one of the most effective PR strategies is lobbying and negotiating. Using this strategy, more than 50 procurement projects have been successfully implemented throughout Indonesia each year. This success shows that lobbying and negotiating strategies are not only capable of increasing the success of sales transactions, but also expanding the company's business network. The more agencies that collaborate with CV. Borong Persada, the stronger the brand awareness that is created. These good relationships with stakeholders ultimately help CV. Borong Persada to maintain its position as a provider of goods and services and increase the loyalty of its business partners and consumers. Thus, the success in implementing this PR strategy has a sustainable impact on the company's growth and reputation.

IV. CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study shows that the public relations strategy implemented by CV. Borong Persada in building brand awareness has covered various aspects of the public relations mix proposed by Thomas L. Harris, even though this company does not have a specific division for public relations. Public relations activities in this company play an important role in introducing the brand and supporting the success of sales transactions, although not all elements in the PENCILS strategy have a significant impact. This study identifies that developing good relationships with internal and external parties is key to building brand awareness, and there are three PENCILS strategies that are considered most effective, namely events, community involvement, and lobbying and negotiating. CV. Borong Persada should develop a more planned and systematic public relations strategy and conduct periodic evaluations of the effectiveness of each component of the strategy implemented. In this way, the company is expected to increase brand recognition, strengthen its reputation, expand its market reach, and support long-term business growth.

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