Enhancing University Brand Awareness via Instagram Strategies

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Abstract. In the context of the fiercely competitive higher education landscape, marked by the advent of the Independent Campus era, the Communication Science Study Program at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Political Sciences, UHAMKA, has strategically leveraged Instagram to enhance its brand awareness. This study employs a descriptive qualitative research method to investigate the communication strategies implemented by the program to bolster its presence on Instagram, a platform chosen for its high penetration and user engagement rates in Indonesia. The research, conducted over six months, entailed literature reviews, observations, and interviews to gather data, further analyzed through a rigorous process as outlined by Miles and Huberman. The findings reveal that UHAMKA's Communication Science Study Program has adeptly integrated its communication efforts with the broader university strategy, emphasizing core values and leveraging Instagram's features to effectively engage with its target audience. This approach has not only facilitated a stronger brand identity but also resulted in increased brand awareness among potential students and stakeholders. The study underscores the pivotal role of strategic social media use in higher education marketing, offering valuable insights into effective brand communication in the digital age. Through this exploration, the research highlights the necessity for educational institutions to adopt cohesive and innovative communication strategies to navigate the competitive academic sector successfully.

**Keywords*:* Communication Strategy, Brand Awareness, Uhamka Communication Science, Business Communication, Instagram*.*

1 Introduction

In today's digital era, social media has become a part of everyday life. There are many social media platforms, one of which is popular in Indonesia is the Instagram application. According to Datareportal [1] Instagram users in Indonesia are in third place with 99.15 million, with Facebook at 129 million and YouTube at 139 million at the beginning of 2022. This can be seen in datarepotal which shows that globally , this number is equivalent to 35.7% of Instagram advertising reach, while locally Indonesian Instagram users reached 48.4%, with 52.3% of the audience being female and 47.7% male.

Using Instagram is not only personal, but can be for organizational or business purposes. Instagram provides a switch feature to a business Instagram account (Instagram for Business) which users can use to develop their business, either to promote products or communicate with

potential clients. Based on Bisnis.instagram.com, there are 200 million Instagram account users for business, one of which is the CommunicationsUhamka account, as the official account of the Communication Sciences Study Program (Prodi), FISIP UHAMKA.

The Uhamka Faculty of Social and Political Sciences Communication Studies Program is an educational institution that specializes in scientific knowledge in Communication Sciences at Muhammadiyah University, Prof. DR. Hamka. Universities are educational institutions that are basically almost the same as other organizations operating in various sectors, such as industry and services. Higher education produces reliable human resource output, so for this it requires the superiority of the organization's name in the eyes of the public or awareness of the company's name, which is called brand awareness.

According to [2] brand awareness is the ability of a potential buyer to recognize or recall a brand that is part of a product category. Entering the era of independent campuses, the world of higher education is increasingly competitive. Higher education competition is not only in the scope of increasing campus reputation, but also in terms of brand awareness. Thus, the department must have an image in the minds of consumers of a university, which in this case are students, prospective students and student guardians. Self-image or image branding of study programs is important to foster public trust in educational institutions which at its peak will help the development of the science being studied.

The ability of customers to recognize or remember a product brand depends on the communication strategy implemented by the company. Therefore, study programs must be able to create effective and efficient strategies to increase brand awareness. This research focuses on the communication strategies carried out by the UHAMKA Communication Studies Program to increase brand awareness through Instagram.

There is a lot of research related to the Communication Study Program, such as research by [3] with the research title, Brand Image Strategy of the Stain Majene Islamic Communication and Broadcasting Study Program, which examines the factors forming the band image of the STAIN Majene Islamic Communication and Broadcasting Study Program and the impact of forming the program's brand image STAIN Majene Islamic Communication and Broadcasting Studies. This type of research is descriptive, qualitative research. Data was obtained through interview techniques, observation, interviews and literature study and using interactive model data analysis techniques. The results of his research show that the brand image of the STAIN Majene Islamic Communication and Broadcasting Study Program is formed by several factors, namely: leadership figures, scholarship offers, increased cooperation with several stakeholders, the curriculum offered, social media management, and superior programs. These factors have an impact on the increasing recognition of the Islamic communication and broadcasting study program, and the increase in interest in the image of the STAIN Majene Islamic Communication and Broadcasting Study Program in the third year, reaching an increase of around 300%.

Likewise with [4], her research entitled, Study Program Strategy to Increase Brandawareness (Studies in the Communication Science Study Program, Faculty of Social Sciences, Humanities, UIN Sunan Kalijaga), examines brand awareness or brand awareness of higher education as part of improving services to the community. . Study programs can form brand awareness that can remain firmly in the minds of the public. The formation of brand awareness for each study program is very much determined by its target students, who its competitors are, and how to ensure that the study program in question has higher credibility when compared to similar study programs on other campuses. Qualitative research method with SWOT analysis.

Aileen Belinda, [5] researched Marketing Communication in Building Brand Awareness (Partipost Case Study), whose research explains that changes in business models are a challenge

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for business people so they must innovate so as not to be left behind by increasingly digitalized consumers. One effort to build and improve a company's image in the digital era is brand awareness, which requires continuous effort to build it. The aim of this research is to determine the marketing used by Partipost in building brand awareness of a brand. The research method used is a descriptive qualitative approach. The research used in-depth interviews with three sources, namely two Partipost members and an influencer at Partipost. The research data obtained came from interviews, online data, observation and documentation. This research shows that the marketing communications used by Partipost in building brand awareness of a brand, by using several interrelated marketing communication elements or mixes, will create a form of marketing that is unique to Partipost. The form of marketing used is a marketing campaign, which aims to build brand awareness. To determine the success of building brand awareness is determined by the interaction or engagement in the marketing carried out. By using several interrelated marketing communication elements or mixes, Partipost will create a unique form of marketing. The form of marketing used is a marketing campaign, which aims to build brand awareness. To determine the success of building brand awareness is determined by the interaction or engagement in the marketing carried out. By using several interrelated marketing communication elements or mixes, Partipost will create a unique form of marketing. The form of marketing used is a marketing campaign, which aims to build brand awareness. To determine the success of building brand awareness is determined by the interaction or engagement in the marketing carried out.

This research has a concept on business communication, communication strategy, marketing communication strategy, brand awareness and Instagram. The FISIP UHAMKA Communication Science Study Program is a unified learning plan that is used as a guide for the course of academic education which is implemented based on a curriculum in the field of Communication Science. The FISIP UHAMKA Communication Science study program is one of the scientific specializations in the field of communication at FISIP UHAMKA so that this uniqueness can be embedded in the UHAMKA academic community and the hearts of the community, so it requires brand awareness. This research will research and examine the Communication Science Study Program in carrying out brand awareness and the communication strategies carried out to increase brand awareness.

The FISIP UHAMKA Communication Science Study Program is within the organizational scope in the context of business communication. Business communication is basically a process of exchanging information and business messages in forming organizational systems and structures that are conducive to maximizing the efficiency and effectiveness of work products. According to [6] business communication includes various forms of communication, both verbal and nonverbal communication that have certain goals to be achieved.

According to Sendjaja's opinion in there are four functions of business communication in organizations, informative, controlling (Regulatory), persuasive and integrative. For business communication purposes, Cutis, James J. Floyd and Jerry L.state; 1) Solve problems and make decisions; 2) A person's position in the business; 3) Expertise in solving problems and making decisions for business progress; 4) Evaluate behavior; 5) Fulfillment of needs for goods and services.

In communication, Laswell states that communication is basically a process that explains who, says what, through what channels, to whom and with what consequences or results are produced. This explanation represents the elements that exist in communication, namely source, message, channel, media, receiver and effect. According to Anwar Arifin states that

communication strategy is knowing the audience, compiling messages, determining goals, determining methods and choosing media.

In business, it cannot be separated from marketing, so according to marketing communication strategy, there are three stages of marketing communication strategy that need to be carried out by the company, namely determining marketing objectives, determining segmentation and targeting, and determining differentiation and positioning. According to Kotler and the marketing mix by integrating marketing communications consists of 4 (four) elements, namely a). Product, which is a combination of goods and services that the company offers to the target market. b). Price, which is the amount of money consumers have to pay to get the product. c). Place, namely various company activities to make the products produced or sold more affordable and available to target consumers. d).

According to Aaker in[4] brand awareness is the ability of someone who is a potential buyer to recognize or recall a brand as part of a product category. This brandawareness also has levels. We can separate these levels into four categories, namely: 1) unaware of brand, someone does not know the brand. 2) brand recognition, brand recognition, but still at a very minimal level and understanding. 3) brand recall, someone is asked to name products in a certain product category without help. 4) top of mind, the name of a brand or brand that is mentioned first by someone, is in a special position.

Instagram is a social media platform that is widely used by Indonesian internet users or netizens. An application that is easy, fun and creative to use to take, edit, share photos, videos and messages with friends and family. Instagram was created by Kevin Systrom in 2010. The creation of Instagram coincided with Burn INC which was then integrated and developed into Instagram. Activities on Instagram started to share photos and videos, then developed into a business. Instagram provides a switch feature to a business Instagram account (Instagram for Business) which users can use to develop their business, either to promote products or communicate with potential clients.

2 Research Methodology

This research was carried out at the Uhamka Communication Studies Program. The data collection process was carried out for 6 months. The approach used is descriptive qualitative, with data collection methods using literature searches, observations and interviews. In this research, the data analysis technique used, according to Miles and Huberman (in Herdiansyah, 2010:164) consists of four stages. Starting from the first stage, namely the data collection stage, the data reduction stage, the data display stage, to the fourth stage, the conclusion or data verification stage. The author then uses source triangulation, aiming to explore the truth of certain information through various sources to obtain data to find out the reasons for the differences. Data processing is carried out by classifying data and grouping data. From these results, the data is then analyzed and displayed in the form of a description.

3 Results And Discussion

In a university's business processes, business communication cannot be separated. Communication activities, strengthening, maintaining a brand in order to provide a perspective to other people who see it are called branding. The Uhamka Communication Science Study

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Program is an educational institution that was founded in 1998. As one of the departments at Muhammadiyah universities, Al-Islam and Muhammadiyah are important values instilled by the university so that its graduates have competencies in accordance with the learning outcomes outlined . In this case, a brand must be able to find its own best platform for success in the form of a brand identity with a unique and meaningful vision, this is one of the main components that is mandatory in improving brand strategy

3.1 Communication Strategy for the UHAMKA Communication Science Study Program

The communication strategy of the Uhamka Communication Science Study Program is integrated with the communication strategy of Muhammadiyah University, Prof. DR. Hamka. That's what Farida Hariyati said as Head of Communication Science Study Program, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, [7] According to [8]Alo communication strategy is planning to complete an activity as part of efforts to achieve certain goals. In organizing, states that an organization is an activity or activities as well as all kinds of aspects related to efforts to achieve business goals to be achieved.

As part of Uhamka integration, the communication activities of the Uhamka Communication Science Study Program are based on the Al-Qur'an and Assunah which are reflected in the Muqaddimah of Muhammadiyah's Articles of Association, Muhammadiyah's Faith and Life Ideals, Muhammadiyah's Personality, as well as Muhammadiyah's Khittah and other steps which become ideological doctrines. Muhammadiyah.

Uhamka establishes three basic values that Uhamka academics must have, namely honesty (integrity), trust and compassion. These three basic values are applied to the principles of implementing the Uhamka work program, namely 1). Sincerity and obedience; 2). Systemicity and contribution[; 3). Solutions and vision; 4). UHAMKA Strategic Plan 2020-2024; 5). Credibility and professionalism; 6). Effectiveness and efficiency; 7). Transparency and accountability; 8). Productivity and usefulness; 9). Sensitivity and openness; 10). Harmonization and communication; 11). Cadre formation and continuity.

The basic values and working principles of Uhamka above are integrated activities between the academic framework and planning of various resources. states that branding is a combination of names, terms, signs, symbols or designs to identify goods, services or groups of sellers and to differentiate them from competing goods or services. MarkPlus Institute of identifies brand levels, namely attributes, attribute benefits, values, culture, personality and users.

Entering its 24th year, the Communication Science Study Program FISIP UHAMKA has five areas of specialization, namely Public Relations, Journalism, Broadcasting, Advertising and Communication Management. Along with the development of information and communication technology, the UHAMKA Communication Science Study Program also synergizes and becomes part of digital activities.

The communication strategy of the Uhamka Communication Science Study Program is shown as an organizational activity in achieving goals. Arni said that everything related to plans and tactics or methods that will be used to facilitate communication by presenting the sender, message and recipient in the communication process to achieve the desired goals is called communication strategy.

3.2 Instagram Communication @KomunikasiUhamka in Increasing Brand Awareness

As technology develops, the Uhamka Communication Study Program's publication media is through social media, one of which is Instagram. Based on report data, Instagram is in third position as the largest user in Indonesia. Instagram occupies the highest position among other social media, so Instagram can be an option used to increase brand awareness. Aaker states that brand awareness is the ability of someone who is a potential buyer to recognize or recall a brand as part of a product category.

Measuring brand awareness on @KomunikasiUhamka can be seen from the amount of engagement or interaction with account content. This interaction can be seen from likes, comments, mentions and follower content, because good communication results are when the audience pays attention or responds.

Using Instagram by the Uhamka Communication Study Program is applied to the Instagram account @komunikasiuhamka. Account name that reflects the organization's identity. The account profile photo uses the Uhamka Communications logo. The account bio explains the number of specializations in the Uhamka Communication Study Program, namely Journalism, Public Relations, Broadcasting, Advertising and Communication Management.

Based on the Instagram account profile of the Uhamka Communication Science Study Program, it shows that his Instagram account has become a brand identity for the Communication Science Study Program. Brand identity describes the vision, uniqueness, and distinctiveness of the brand. Branding aims to shape public perception, build public trust in the brand and build public love for the brand.

Instagram is present as an application that continues to innovate. It started just sharing photos and videos, then expanded with streaming and TV. Instagram accounts can switch from personal to business. Almost all of the features are the same, what differentiates personal and business Instagram accounts is the following:

1. Contact Menu. The contact menus of personal and business accounts have significant differences. Personal accounts will only receive messages from users who send direct messages, while business accounts can communicate with potential clients using telephone or email and the address in the contact menu. Because of the differences in the contact menu, the appearance of personal and business accounts is also different. Because, usually the telephone, email and address menus on business accounts will be visible on the business's Instagram profile. The Uhamka Communications Instagram account shows that it has been transferred to Instagram for business even though it has not yet participated in paid business.

2. Insights feature. The most prominent difference between personal and business accounts is the Insight feature. This feature can only be found on business accounts to make business promotions more effective and relevant. The insight feature will provide Content, Activity and Audience options.

   a. Content, functions to find out how many accounts have seen content that has been created or posted, the number of users who have seen stories, the number of people who have left stories, the number of replies received, and other information. It is known that Uhamka Communication's Instagram activity contains a lot of comments on student achievement information and video content.

   b. Activity, functions to find out how many interactions occur on a business's IG account, showing the number of business profiles visited by other people, the number of followers clicking on the website, email and call buttons in the contact menu. Based on research results from January 6 to June 22, there were 44 posts with the theme of 27 study program

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information messages, 7 congratulations for achievements, 8 warning information, and 2 videos.

c.   Audience, functions to show demographics or data regarding gender, age, geography of followers on business accounts. This menu will also provide information regarding the effective hours of online followers on IG. For manual audiences from views and likes, the most views are student activity posts and videos. The highest number of views was on video content with 278 views of student work and photos congratulating students on graduation with 251 views, and the fewest with information on student activity announcements with 20 views.

Instagram is a digital platform that focuses on visuals, so it is not surprising that @KomunikasiUhamka Instagram feed video posts get more views. In terms of content, of the 44 posts, all contain elements of providing positive and informative information to the public. Instagram activities @KomunikasiUhamka can help increase brand awareness of the Uhamka Communication Science Study Program.

4 Conclusion

The FISIP UHAMKA Communication Science Study Program is a vocational education that specializes in Communication Science with specializations in Public Relations, Journalism, Broadcasting, Advertising and Communication Management. In achieving student achievements in the five areas of specialization, the Communication Study Program's communication strategy is integrated with the university's strategy. To increase brand awareness, the Uhamka Communication Study Program uses social media such as Instagram. Instagram can help get more targets, so that the profile displayed can show the profile of the Uhamka Communication Science Study Program.

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