

Marketing Public Relations Autobot School in Increasing Brand Awareness

Ely Devi Agustin^{1*}, Iva Fikrani Deslia²

^{1,2} Communication Science, Ahmad Dahlan University, Yogyakarta, 55191, Indonesia

Corresponding author's Email: ely2000030153@webmail.uad.ac.id, iva.deslia@comm.uad.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Keywords

Autobot School
Brand Awareness
Marketing Public Relations

This research discusses Autobot School Marketing Public Relations in increasing Brand Awareness. This research aims to determine the implementation carried out by Autobot School using the Three Ways strategy concept according to Ruslan (2020) including pull strategy, push strategy and pass strategy. Apart from that, the researcher also used Whalen's 7-Step Strategic Planning Process theoretical stage model, namely the stages of Situation Analysis, Objectives, Defining Strategy, Identifying Targets, Messages, Tactics, Evaluation according to Harris & Whalen (2006). Research data collection was obtained by conducting interviews, observation and documentation. The results of this research found that this theory has been applied by Autobot School Marketing Public Relations in carrying out the Autobot School Marketing Public Relations program to increase Brand Awareness.

1. Introduction

The development of technology and information is currently increasingly rapid in various aspects of individual life. One aspect that is impacted by current technological developments is in the world of education. In order to be able to adapt to technological developments in the future, education today requires a type of learning that is interesting and continues to innovate. One learning innovation that utilizes technology is robotics learning. With the presence of robotics learning in educational institutions, it is hoped that it can improve the quality of human resources so that they are more skilled in utilizing developing technology.

Currently, various courses and training institutions regarding robotics have taken advantage of opportunities to improve education in the field of technology. One of them is the Autobot School, which is a training institution that has been present since 2018 to participate in responding to the challenges of future technological developments by providing collaboration in extracurricular robotics activities in various educational institutions. Autobot school has successfully collaborated with more than 100 schools and has more than 400 students in the Klaten, Yogyakarta and Surakarta areas. However, during the Covid-19 pandemic, Autobot School stopped its robotics education activities and only started after the pandemic in 2023.

With so many robotics course institutions, competition for various robotics course institutions is currently very high, so there is a need to increase Brand Awareness to differentiate the superiority of these institutions from competitors. Brand Awareness is an important factor in building consumer awareness in choosing when using a service or product. Brand Awareness is an individual's ability to recognize and remember brands from a certain category, and is the main dimension of brand equity (Keller in Juliana and Sabrina O. Sihombing, 2019:22). Various promotional activities, sponsorships, special events, and Marketing Public Relations activities can help consumers try the brand and increase their awareness of the brand. Marketing Public Relations plays an important role in increasing Brand Awareness so that institutions are able to compete with competitors. Marketing public relations

must develop strategies to introduce the value of their products to make them more attractive to consumers. The main focus of marketing public relations is to provide information, educate and build consumer understanding through information that increases understanding and knowledge about a product or service brand so that it will be better remembered by consumers, which also makes the company superior (Floor & Raaij, 2011).

In general, Marketing Public Relations is a planning process, so it is important to design a marketing public relations strategy as a form of careful and comprehensive planning regarding all activities that encourage the development of a positive image of an agency. The role of Marketing Public Relations here is needed to build strategies in program planning to increase Autobot School Brand Awareness. The Marketing Public Relations planning process has 7 strategic planning steps proposed by Harris & Whalen (2006:57) and is usually called The Whalen 7 Step Strategic Planning which includes:

Situation Analysis. This process is used to analyze the situation and define what is happening in an organization or company to reach a decision regarding the actions implemented by the organization in an effort to resolve the problem. According to Harris in (Messakh & Fuady, 2017), this process is used to analyze the situation of an organization or company to obtain solutions to resolve existing problems.

Objective. The process of setting goals must be specific and measurable. These goals are divided into two, namely short-term and long-term goals. Short-term goals are the company's achievements in the form of numbers, while long-term goals lead to changes in behavior expected by the company.

Defining Strategi. Strategy is a plan for how marketing public relations efforts will be carried out. The strategy is prepared by adjusting the company's budget, so that Marketing Public Relations can make appropriate plans.

Identifying Targets. Identifying targets is done to find out who will be reached in preparing the strategy being created. This can be done based on geographic conditions (where you live), demographic (age, income, gender, etc.), to psychographics (economic class, personality, or lifestyle preferences). **Messages,** Message preparation is tailored to the company's needs regarding what values will be trimmed. Messages can be made interesting and persuasive. **Tactics,** It is a method implemented to achieve PR marketing goals. Tactics are important because they are the basis for the successful implementation of Marketing Public Relations. The application of tactics in Marketing Public Relations can be done by giving awards, publishing books or magazines, holding exhibitions, seminars, interviews, and even video news releases. **Evaluating,** Activities to measure success as seen from the realization of several aspects of the planning above. Apart from that, evaluation also functions as a material for improving planned activities.

Based on the introduction that has been explained, this research aims to find out how Marketing Public Relations increases Brand Awareness of Autobot School. Then this research aims to determine the marketing public relations program in increasing Autobot School Brand Awareness.

2. Method

This research uses a qualitative descriptive research method. Qualitative descriptive research methods are often called naturalistic research methods because research is carried out in natural conditions (Sugiono, 2019). This qualitative descriptive research aims to find out a certain picture of a relationship between two or more symptoms. The subject of this research is Autobot School while the research object is the marketing public relations program carried out by Autobot School public relations practitioners. This Marketing Public Relations research uses the Marketing Public Relations planning model contained in Thomas L. Harris and Patricia A. Whalen's book which later became known as The Whalen 7 Step Strategic Planning.

Data analysis in this research was obtained from interviews, field notes and other materials, so it is easy to understand and the findings can be produced inductively according to data obtained in the field.

3. Result and Discussion

Autobot School is a non-formal course and training institution which operates in the field of assisting learning about automation systems and robotics. The scope of its activities is to provide cooperation in extracurricular robotics activities, competition assistance, as well as Robotics and Automation Systems training for kindergarten, elementary, middle and high school / vocational school students, as well as the general public. Marketing Public Relations Autobot School carries out Marketing Public Relations activities with a theory commonly called The Whalen 7 step strategy planning including: (1) Situation analysis, (2) Objectives, (3) Defining Strategy, (4) Targets, (5) Messages, (6) Tactics, (7) Evaluating. Based on the results of interviews and collecting research data, this research focuses on the Marketing Public Relations program, namely: (1) Autobot Goes to School, (2) Social Media, (3) Robotic Workshop, (4) Jogja Robotic Competition. This program was then linked to The Whalen 7 Steps Planning strategy which shows that Marketing Public Relations Autobot School carried out this program to increase the company's Brand Awareness.



Figure 1. Location of the Autobot School Office
Source: Researcher documentation

3.1. Presenting The Results

Based on the results of interviews obtained, Autobot School Marketing Public Relations uses the theory of The Whalen 7 Steps Strategy Planning, which is a Marketing Public Relations planning process concept coined by Harris & Whalen (2006:57). The following is the implementation:

Situation Analysis. Based on interviews conducted, Marketing Public Relations Autobot School conducted a situation analysis by looking at opportunities focused on the Klaten, Surakarta and Yogyakarta areas by maximizing the target market in these cities. Apart from that, in practice, Marketing Public Relations also expands the field of technology and robotics by conducting exploratory research on team ideas and brainstorming in introducing, promoting and establishing relationships with Autobot School stakeholders. Before preparing the program, Marketing PR Autobot School also adjusts it to the Company's values and needs. **Objective.** In an interview conducted by Marketing Public Relations Autobot School in setting goals according to the company's vision and mission and the targets of the company's CEO. The program carried out by Autobot School's Marketing Public Relations also emphasizes maximizing the program implemented by creating new innovations that adapt to the target market in representing Autobot School in the eyes of the public and providing the latest information regarding robotics technology. Apart from that, the main aim of the various programs is to increase service promotion and Brand Awareness to the public.

Defining Strategy. The strategy carried out by Autobot School Marketing Public Relations is to align the main tasks and utilize the potential of human resources at Autobot School who can communicate well. In preparing a strategic program, Marketing Public Relations conducts research on the existing conditions in the company, then makes observations in the field according to the

intended targets, then brainstorms and prepares a program and continues with executing the program that has been prepared. In practice, Marketing Public Relations Autobot School implements three public relations marketing strategies which are usually called Three Ways Strategy in The Whalen 7 Step Strategy Planning. In the Three Ways Strategy Marketing public relations theory, Autobot School uses this strategy to increase its Brand Awareness which includes:

Push Strategi, is the ability of marketing public relations to attract the attention of the target market directly. In this case, Autobot School's Marketing Public Relations uses the Autobot Goes to School program. **Pull Strategy**, According to Harris in (Ali, 2017), a pull strategy is a strategy that aims to attract customers through various media and is aimed at end consumers, so that it is hoped that consumers will come themselves to use the product. The pull strategy is also able to build good relationships and does not require a large advertising campaign because people already know the product and know what they expect from the product (Bazaza, 2020). Marketing Public Relations Autobot School uses media to publish content created via social media which is routinely done once a week. **Pass Strategy**, is a strategy to generate good public opinion by individuals or groups (Ediraras, et al., 2013). This activity can be carried out through collaboration with activists, community leaders, awareness programs, events and sponsorship. The public relations marketing strategy carried out by the autobot school is by holding events in the form of robotics competitions and talk shows in them (Jogja Robotic Competition), and Robotics Workshops.

Targets. The targets determined by Marketing Public Relations Autobot School include the Yogyakarta, Surakarta and Klaten areas. The main focus in this target is the community involved in the world of education. Like the Klaten Education Department in establishing collaboration to support the presence of the Autobot School in schools in Klaten. Then, students at each school that implements the "Autobot Goes to School" program can continue their tutoring at Autobot School and teachers who will collaborate with extracurricular facilities provided by Autobot School. Apart from that, in implementing programs in public places such as the "Jogja Robotic Competition", Marketing Public Relations also sets targets for the wider community to increase Brand Awareness of Autobot School.

Messages. Based on the results of interviews conducted, Marketing Public Relations determines messages using programs that are easy to understand with attractive execution in the community in order to further increase Brand Awareness in the eyes of the public regarding Autobot School. With their abilities as PR, of course they are able to present messages more interestingly and have a big impact (Kitchen, 2015).

Tactics. Based on interviews conducted, in identifying Marketing Public Relations tactics, Autobot School identifies them according to company needs, presents new innovations, and implements programs so that they can be better known by the target market and the public. Here's the implementation:

Autobot Goes to School. This program is an outreach program regarding robotic technology carried out by the Autobot School to kindergartens and elementary schools around Klaten and Surakarta. This socialization is in collaboration with the Teachers division and is carried out 3-4 times a week. The "Autobot Goes to School" program was successfully implemented in more than 15 schools in Klaten and Surakarta.



Figure 2. Autobot Goes to School SD N 1 Mojayan

Source: Autobot School documentation

Social Media. Marketing Public Relations Autobot School uses TikTok as a social media that can increase Brand Awareness by regularly creating content in the form of videos. This content is produced by Marketing Public Relations who are responsible for Digital Branding on social media, posting content once a week. It is hoped that the use of published content through TikTok can reach a wider audience to attract public interest in Autobot School.

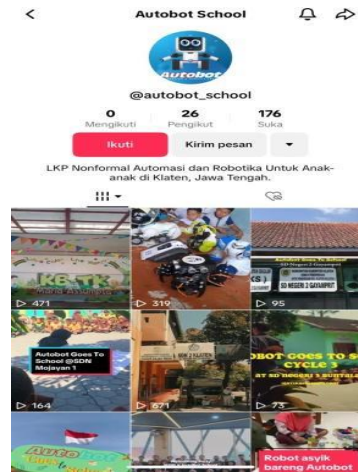


Figure 3. Autobot School TikTok page
Source: TikTok @autobot_school

Workshop Robotic. This Robotic Workshop is a follow-up training program from the "Autobot Goes to School" program. This program also collaborates with the Teacher division to provide training to Workshop participants. This workshop was attended by more than 30 participants and more than 15 assistants to be trained so they could take part in the "Jogja Robotic Competition" and to provide further collaboration between Autobot School and related schools.



Figure 4. Robotics Workshop
Source: Autobot School documentation

Jogja Robotic Competition. Jogja Robotic Competition is a robotics competition organized by Marketing Public Relations Autobot School at Pakuwon Mall Jogja. Apart from holding competitions, this event also contained a talk show with the theme "preparing society 5.0" which was attended by 3 speakers from technology and psychology practitioners.



Figure 5. Jogja Robotic Competition
Source: Autobot School documentation

Evaluating. The evaluation carried out by Marketing Public Relations Autobot School was based on the results of interviews conducted after the program was implemented. To determine the success of the program implemented, this evaluation is adjusted to observations in the field whether or not it is in accordance with the design that has been prepared.

3.2 Discussion

Based on the results of applying The Whalen 7 Steps Strategy Planning theory to the Marketing Public Relations planning process initiated by (Harris & Whalen 2006:57) as follows:

Situation Analysis. The situation analysis carried out by Marketing Public Relations Autobot School is in accordance with the application of applied research theory where in practice Marketing Public Relations Autobot School analyzes situations based on the problems and urgency that exist in the company and based on research in the field. **Objective.** In setting Marketing Public Relations Goals, Autobot School has set goals in accordance with its target market and objectives, namely by building Brand Awareness in society and building relationships and networks with stakeholders.

Defiing Strategy. In implementing the Marketing Public Relations strategy, Autobot School has adapted the Three Ways Strategy contained in The Whalen 7 Step Strategic Planning by realizing the program that has been prepared. **Targets.** The targets determined by Marketing Public Relations Autobot School are in accordance with existing theory and its implementation. Marketing Public Relations Autobot School sets its targets based on existing market segments.

Messages. The messages conveyed by the programs implemented by Marketing Public Relations Autobot School have adapted to the theory used, being able to present messages by attracting the audience's attention with innovative execution and tactics. **Tactics.** In this case, the tactics used by Marketing Public Relations Autobot School have created programs that are attractive and attract the attention of the public by providing innovative and sustainable programs. **Evaluating.** The evaluation carried out by Marketing Public Relations Autobot School is in accordance with the theory applied because the evaluation carried out becomes material for criticism and suggestions for Marketing Public Relations Autobot School for the implementation of the next program.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results and discussion of research regarding Marketing Public Relations Autobot School in increasing Brand Awareness, Marketing Public Relations Autobot School has implemented The Whalen 7 Steps Strategy by analyzing the situation, setting goals, establishing strategies with the Three Ways Strategy concept which includes (1) Push Strategy, (2) Pull Strategy, (3) Pass Strategy, determine targets, create messages, identify tactics with the program (1) Autobot Goes to School, (2) Social Media, (3) Robotics Workshop (4) Jogja Robot Competition and evaluation of each program implemented.

5. Acknowledgement

On this occasion the researcher would like to thank the relevant parties, especially the Autobot School, which has provided space for researchers to conduct research. Thank you also to the Communication Science study program for supporting this research.

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