

## Innovative Marketing Strategies in Organizing Educational Events

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### Abstract

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The development of globalization has an impact on the development of communication in the field of education. Various online activities are carried out such as educational events. The implementation of educational events requires an innovative marketing strategy to attract seminar participants. In this study, researchers conducted research on innovative marketing strategies at SMKN 3 Malang to know the innovative marketing strategies used at SMKN 3 Malang in organizing various educational events. The research method used is qualitative research with a case study approach. The data collection technique used is a triangulation technique using observation, interviews, and documentation. The research subject is the Vice Principal of Public Relations. Based on the results of the research that has been carried out, it can be concluded that in planning an educational event, public relations analyze the target market by the theme of the activity and prepares financing details. SMKN 3 Malang's marketing strategy in implementing educational events uses the 5P components, namely product, price, place, public relations, and positioning. Various media partners also take part in supporting events held at SMKN 3 Malang.

**Keywords:** marketing strategy; innovative; educational event

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## INTRODUCTION

In the current modernization era, there have been many developments that can be felt by every individual in his life, due to the many technologies and sciences that have sprung up and continue to experience developments in every era which certainly affect every human life. The work of this modernization period provides convenience in every aspect of human life, both in the fields of health, economy, transportation, society, culture, and others.

The works that emerge from the current modern era also open the perspective of each individual in seeing the world. In the past, before the existence of technology and science like today, humans only saw the world based on the scope of the surrounding environment that had certain values, norms, and rules, so that all knowledge in the form of values, culture, culture, norms and others was only limited to the surrounding environment. However, this changed with the existence of globalization so that humans have a broader perspective that is not only locked in their environment but, outside the surrounding environment which includes the whole world, both from geography, territory, values, culture, society, culture, and others.

Globalization can be interpreted as the process of entering individuals into the scope of the world. As explained earlier, humans or individuals used to live their lives only within the scope of the surrounding environment, but turned into the scope of the world. Globalization occurs because of the interaction of a person in one place with other people in other parts of the world (Thomas Larsson in Widiанти, 2022). From these interactions,

they exchange views of the world, thoughts, values, cultures, and other cultural aspects. Technological advances in transportation, and telecommunications, especially telegraphs and the internet are the main factors in the emergence of globalization.

One of the impacts of globalization is the ease of communication (Ramadhan et al., 2022). This is in the form of speed in obtaining and providing information between individuals who are in different environments, ease of accessing all available information, knowing and knowing the whereabouts of other individuals outside the environment even in distant areas, and others. Information that is spread very massively and quickly consists of science, technology, thought, ideology, values, norms, rules, culture or culture, and others. This information can be spread because of the media as a tool or technology that can disseminate information quickly and massively.

Along with the development of easier communication, various government sectors, one of which is the education sector, carry out activities through online using the Zoom application, gmeet, Google Classroom, and others. To continue to support the potential of educators and education personnel, the government or educational institutions make various innovations in carrying out educational seminars. Educational seminars can be a means to introduce new ideas, broaden horizons, and improve the quality of education.

However, holding educational seminars is not an easy thing. One of the challenges faced is how to attract participants to attend the seminar. In the increasingly advanced digital era, seminar participants have many options to obtain information and knowledge through various online platforms. Therefore, innovative marketing strategies are needed to attract participants in educational seminar activities.

Innovative marketing strategies can involve various approaches to attract participants and gain maximum exposure. In this article, we will discuss some innovative marketing strategies that can be applied in the context of educational seminars. From the use of social media to the use of digital technology, we will discuss new ways to promote educational seminars and attract participants. In carrying out educational seminar activities, the government and related institutions use various media to conduct marketing through digital media. Digital media can help businesses sell their products (Stelzner, 2012). With this digital media trying to generate and disseminate information.

The results of research by Lupiyoadi state that marketing activities consist of advertising, public relations, word of mouth, and direct and online marketing. Direct marketing is considered the most effective promotional strategy because communication can be established directly (Lupiyoadi, 2006). According to Ainurrahma, et al, the public relations strategy that is carried out relies heavily on the role of social media, especially Instagram, in disseminating program information by creating interesting content. In addition, a direct approach is taken through activities related to the event (Ainurrahmah et al., 2018). In contrast to previous research, this study focuses on innovative marketing strategies in the implementation of seminars, especially educational seminars. Based on this background, this study aims to determine the marketing strategies used by SMKN 3 Malang in organizing various educational events.

## **METHODS**

The research method used is qualitative using a case study approach. Case study is one type of qualitative approach that examines cases in a particular context (John W. Creswell in Rizal Safarudin, et al, 2023). This research was conducted through observation, interviews, and analysis of documents related to innovative marketing strategies at SMKN 3 Malang. The research subject is the Deputy Head of Public Relations of SMKN 3 Malang. This research was conducted from February 26, 2024, to March 8, 2024.

Data collection techniques using triangulation techniques, analysis of data obtained then developed into hypotheses. The observation was carried out before the researcher carried out the research. Interviews were conducted by researchers to obtain more in-depth information related to innovative marketing strategies in educational events at SMKN 3 Malang. Documentation was carried out by researchers when conducting research at SMKN 3 Malang.

## **RESULTS & DISCUSSION**

### ***Results***

Based on the results of interviews with the Vice Principal for Public Relations of SMKN 3 Malang, seminar management was carried out by the school by becoming the second party in organizing the event. For example, if the seminar or event is related to the curriculum, then starting from planning and organizing the event will be carried out by the Curriculum section. If the seminar or event is related to student affairs, the planning and organization will be carried out by the student affairs department assisted by OSIS members, while the Public Relations team will assist in promoting, finding sponsors, finding a venue, and so on.

Determination of the amount of budget needed in the implementation of seminars or events is carried out at various stages, namely determining the target and target markets according to the theme of the activity, calculating the various costs required including consumption costs, building rental costs, cleaning costs and others. The source of funds obtained for seminars or events carried out by SMKN 3 Malang comes from sponsorship funds, alumni donation funds, student fees, Education Operational Support Costs (BPOPP), and School Operational Assistance (BOS) funds. For the allocation of funds from BPOPP and BOS, the amount of costs incurred must refer to the School Budget Work Plan (RKAS) and be recorded in the General Cash Book (BKU) and then included in the reporting. Meanwhile, in the implementation of exhibition activities, SMKN 3 Malang received funding assistance from the Vocational Education Quality Assurance Development Center (BBPPMPV) Business and Tourism (Bispar) which was used in renting a building or place for holding school exhibitions.

Determination of committee members for seminars or events at SMKN 3 Malang depends on the theme or program of certain fields. Public Relations of SMKN 3 Malang in managing seminars or event management gets a job desk to make and distribute invitations, conduct documentation, and in its implementation will be broadcast live via Youtube on the SMKN 3 Malang channel by the Information Technology (IT) team. The event marketing strategy at SMKN 3 Malang uses word-of-mouth techniques, Videotron, making flyers which are distributed on Instagram to Students and Teachers, WhatsApp groups, WhatsApp Stories of all teachers and education staff, and WhatsApp alumni. However, at certain events, promotion is also carried out through newspapers (Malang Pos) and radio, it depends on the product or event to be held.

SMKN 3 Malang collaborates with various media partners, namely Telkomsel, Get Git Mayora, Wafelo, Jafra Cosmetics, MS Glow, Sunsluk, By U, Chef Meet, Maxim, Grab, and Indosat. SMKN 3 Malang's strategy in establishing good relations with media partners is by giving gifts every Eid or certain moments at special events for media partners and giving greetings through flyers. This strategy is considered effective by SMKN 3 Malang as part of public relations activities, to maintain communication and cooperation.

Determination of the place for seminars and events is carried out according to the needs of the event. If the activity is sufficient to accommodate the school hall, it will be

held in the school hall. Except in the implementation of exhibitions for students majoring in Fashion and Beauty, the determination of the exhibition venue is carried out by renting in hotels, malls, and other indoor places. In determining the exhibition venue, there are various considerations, namely the distance between the school and the exhibition venue, the type of exhibition event, that has great potential to be watched by the public, and a place that has high selling power. The determination of distance is related to school considerations in preparing for exhibitions that need to carry several items or equipment for exhibition needs. The consideration is easy to watch by the public and has high selling power because, in the implementation of the exhibition, there will also be sales of both services and goods on display and offered by students.

### ***Discussion***

Strategy is the heart of public relations planning. The strategy includes whatever is to be achieved and how a school is to achieve it (Tresnawati, 2015). A marketing strategy is a plan to have a major influence on the market and has a specific marketing program, such as identifying market needs, mix, committee, product, promotion, distribution price, and sales plan that aims for short-term and long-term marketing (Lubis, et al, 2022). An effective marketing strategy has several stages, namely identifying target needs, determining marketing objectives, designing messages, selecting marketing media, setting marketing budgets, deciding on the marketing mix, and measuring marketing results (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

The Public Relations Division of SMKN 3 Malang in planning an event will identify needs which will then determine who the target of the event is. Hoyle (2002: 12) explains that in marketing an event, 5 essential roles are needed for the success of an event. These are Product, Price, Place, Public Relations, and Positioning.

1. **Product:** anything that can be offered in the form of goods or services to consumers to be purchased or used by consumers so that consumers can fulfill their needs and desires from these products. SMKN 3 Malang in designing an event goes through the stages of identifying consumer needs, this relates to what products the school will offer in an event that will be held. Things that can be offered are goods, services, events, ideas, concepts, or a combination of several of these. SMKN 3 Malang in conducting an exhibition will also sell products in the form of goods and services made by students, whose sales rate is up to 75%. Exhibitions are important because they are a tool that serves to spread a message that is informative, and persuasive and makes the public understand and imprint in the memory of a product or service that is displayed or offered (Santoso and Triana, 2014: 138).
2. **Price:** is one of the benchmarks for determining success in selling products. Pricing needs to consider several things, namely consumer ability, capital, profit, and others. SMKN 3 Malang in planning an event will always do a budget breakdown as a determinant of the need for funds in an event, analyze needs, and include consumption costs, building rental costs, cleaning costs, and so on. The source of funds obtained for seminars or events conducted by SMKN 3 Malang comes from sponsorship funds, alumni donation funds, student fees, Education Operational Support Costs (BPOPP), and School Operational Assistance (BOS) funds. For the allocation of funds from BPOPP and BOS, the amount of costs incurred must refer to the School Budget Work Plan (RKAS) and be recorded in the General Cash Book (BKU) and then included in the reporting. Meanwhile, in the implementation of exhibition activities, SMKN 3 Malang received funding assistance from the Vocational Education Quality Assurance Development Center (BBPPMPV) Business and Tourism (Bispar) which was used in renting a building or place for holding school exhibitions.

3. Place: determining the place is very important in marketing a product. This is related to the ease of consumers in knowing information about a product and the ease of making purchase transactions. Some considerations in determining the place are 1) visibility, 2) strategic location access, 3) large and safe parking lots, 4) a supportive environment, and others. Determining the place to hold an event carried out by SMKN 3 Malang is to consider the needs of the large number of participants. If the school hall can accommodate the entire quota of participants needed, then the implementation of the event is sufficient in the school hall. However, the exception is when conducting an exhibition that requires the attention of the general public, the determination of the venue considers several things, namely the distance between the school and the place where the exhibition is held, the facilities offered by the exhibition venue, and the ease with which the exhibition can be watched and enjoyed by the general public. This aims to attract the attention of consumers so that later consumers can easily obtain information and make purchases of products both goods and services offered by students.
4. Public Relations: at this stage, there is an art to create good relations with the public, organization, company, or institution. Public relations in an educational institution, commonly called public relations, plays a role in marketing and building a good image so that the public can believe in the educational institution (Sandyakala, 2020). In addition, public relations in educational institutions also play a role in fostering and managing good relationships with the internal public such as between employees because good relationships with the internal public are needed to build and maintain the educational institution itself. In addition to internal publics, public relations in educational institutions also play a role in fostering and maintaining good relations with external publics, namely with the community. To gain the trust of the community, public relations must be able to maintain good relations, and must also be able to hear the wishes and opinions of the community. In its development, SMKN 3 Malang has been able to build good relationships internally. This is evidenced by the existence of good communication from various parties when carrying out events at school, such as between principals and teachers, teachers and peers, and teachers and education personnel. Likewise, school public relations can establish good relationships with many external parties who have supported and sponsored the implementation of events at school. Some of the sponsors who have provided support at SMKN 3 Malang include Telkomsel, Get Git Mayora, Wafelo, Jafra Cosmetics, MS Glow, Sunsluk, By U, Chef Meet, Maxim, Grab, and Indosat. Some provide support in the form of cash, exhibition space, and souvenirs for event participants.
5. Positioning: is a strategy to determine marketing plans through intuition, research, and evaluation of consumer fields that can be fulfilled in an event. What types of events can be offered, what level of investment is required from the participants, who will attend, what makes the event different from others how to utilize it based on the unique qualities that the school has, and what market accepts the event concept. An event can be sold effectively until a marketing plan is well developed, which determines success or failure with positioning. Some of the main considerations when positioning an event are location, attention span, competitive costs, programs, and events packaged in the simplest form possible. As a vocational education institution in the field of tourism, SMKN 3 Malang, in conducting events, especially exhibition activities in both culinary and fashion, pays close attention to event marketing plans.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that an important component of 5P as an innovative strategy in marketing an event is market research and analysis. Before someone can design and market an event, they must first determine the needs that are adjusted to the desires, expectations, and anticipation of the audience to whom the

marketing will be directed. The organization will have its main objectives, target market, mainstream constituents, and membership. But sometimes many find additional participants from the primary market, including sponsors and other supporters such as advertisers. Even so, the search for new markets should not stop. For example, in a culinary and fashion exhibition, usually only inviting students of public and private vocational schools in Malang City, the organizers can develop the event by inviting students of public and private vocational schools in Greater Malang. Likewise, many sponsorship achievements can still be developed again by targeting related institutions or agencies. The public relations team as part of the event organizers in schools must research the market in-depth so that they can see trends in time to respond to changing needs and solve small problems before they become big problems. Along with the many changes in demographics desires and marketing issues, we must always follow market developments to overcome market fluctuations in all existing promotional media and marketing tools.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, strategy is important in public relations and organizing educational events. One of the necessary strategies is a marketing strategy. The innovative marketing strategy implemented at SMKN 3 Malang in organizing events through 5Ps consisting of product, price, place, public relations, and positioning. Product is in the form of goods and services produced by students offered in educational events held by SMKN 3 Malang. Price is a detailed budget as a determinant of funding needs in an event such as consumption costs, building rental fees, cleaning fees, and so on. A place means place, this is important because to carry out the event, the right place is needed by paying attention to the participants who take part in the event. Public relations or called public relations plays a role in building effective communication with the public, especially on event targets. In addition, through public relations information about the event being held can be conveyed appropriately. Positioning is a strategy to determine marketing plans through institutions, research, and consumer evaluations that can be fulfilled in events, for example, considering the location of the event, costs, programs, and events that are packaged to attract participants. Therefore, the 5P compound is an innovative strategy in event marketing to attract event participants.

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