

Application of Marketing Communication Strategy in Marketing Activities Consumer Goods Products (Case Study at PT XYZ)

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Abstract

Objective - This study aims to determine marketing communication strategies in consumer goods marketing activities at PT XYZ in Surabaya.

Design/methodology/approach - The object of this research was to examine marketing communication strategies in consumer goods marketing activities at PT XYZ in Surabaya. The subject of research is PT XYZ which is located in Surabaya and the company was chosen because of its position as a market leader in the field of consumer goods product distributors.

Findings - The results showed conformity between conceptual patterns predicted based on relevant theories with patterns of empirical findings of case studies. Based on the analysis carried out, it is concluded that the marketing communication strategy of PT XYZ uses a promotional mix in the form of advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, and marketing events. Marketing communication activities are widely supported by brand-holder companies or principals.

Penerapan Strategi Komunikasi Pemasaran dalam Kegiatan Pemasaran Produk Barang Konsumsi (Studi Kasus di PT XYZ)

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Abstrak

Tujuan – Penelitian ini ingin mengetahui bagaimana strategi komunikasi pemasaran dalam kegiatan pemasaran consumer goods pada PT XYZ Di Surabaya.

Desain/metodologi/pendekatan - Obyek penelitian ini dilakukan untuk mengkaji strategi komunikasi pemasaran dalam kegiatan pemasaran consumer goods pada PT. XYZ di Surabaya. Sedangkan subyek penelitian adalah PT. XYZ yang lokasinya di Surabaya dan dipilihnya perusahaan ini karena posisinya sebagai pemimpin pasar dalam bidang distributor produk consumer goods.

Temuan – Hasil penelitian menunjukkan kesesuaian antara pola-pola konseptual yang diprediksikan berdasarkan teori-teori yang relevan dengan pola-pola temuan empirik studi kasus. Berdasarkan analisis yang dilakukan diperoleh kesimpulan yaitu strategi komunikasi pemasaran PT XYZ menggunakan bauran promosi berupa advertising, sales promotion, personal selling dan marketing event. Aktivitas komunikasi pemasaran banyak didukung oleh perusahaan pemegang merek atau principal.

Introduction

The presence of print and electronic media has created a serious attitude for entrepreneurs where they have to set a promotion strategy. The large number of customers owned by PT XYZ requires marketing communication activities that can reach all customers and how PT XYZ's marketing communication strategy is developed in marketing its

products. A large customer base requires a well-coordinated marketing communication strategy. PT developed XYZ as a market leader agent for consumer products and its customers are supermarkets, wholesalers, sub-distributors, modern markets, and traditional markets. consumer products marketed by PT XYZ are products produced by PT NFI such as Nutrisari,

Tropicana Slim, Hi-Lo, L-men, WRP, etc., Marimas, quantum gas stoves, Inaco Jelly, Kusuka chips, etc. The author will observe how PT XYZ's marketing communication strategy is in accordance with marketing activities and what is interesting in this research is its operations (Siregar, 2023; Kusnadi, Loisa, & Pandrianto, 2022; Mubarak, Lestari, Nurfitriya, Rachmani & Koeswandi, 2018; Hilmawan, Samsudin & Danial, 2022).

The marketing communication activities carried out by the company clearly have a lot of support from brand owners or managers. Studies on marketing communication strategies are generally related to industrial products and services, but the author's study specifically looks at marketing communication strategies for consumer goods. Due to the sizeable market and increasing demand in East Java, marketing opportunities for consumer goods remain attractive and PT XYZ is capitalizing on this. Along with the development of modern markets, especially hypermarkets and supermarkets, the demand for consumer goods has increased rapidly. The growth of modern retail and the existence of brick-and-mortar retailers provides a great opportunity for companies to act as suppliers of basic necessities (Khare, 2021; Helm, Kim & Van Riper, 2020; Setiawan, Rani, Cavaliere, Hiep, Halder, Raisal & Rajest, 2020; Adivar, Hüseyinoğlu & Christopher, 2019; Lopes & Casais, 2022).

The increase in the population of a city will increase the demand for basic needs. This creates opportunities for companies

involved in the distribution of consumer goods. The population density of cities such as Jakarta, Surabaya, Medan, Makassar, Bandung, Surabaya, and other provincial capitals creates opportunities for entrepreneurs to develop their businesses, including in the distribution sector. The city of Surabaya, which is the capital of East Java province, attracts entrepreneurs to develop businesses in the field of distribution of daily products due to the increasing purchasing power of the population and high population density. PT XYZ took advantage of this opportunity to start a consumer product distribution business that serves retailer orders in traditional markets and modern retailers in cities, towns, and regencies. PT XYZ has a sales force as a field sales team to communicate to promote the products offered to consumers. As a company engaged in the distribution of consumer goods, the marketing department must have an integrated marketing communication strategy in order to compete with similar companies (Kushwaha, Singh, Varghese & Singh, 2020; Agung, & Darma, 2019; Katsikeas, Leonidou, & Zeriti, 2020; Labanauskaitė, Fiore & Stašys, 2020).

The success or effectiveness of a communication activity cannot be separated from communication design. The right marketing communication strategy can prevent companies from losing due to ineffective and effective promotional activities (Soemanagara, 2006). Regarding marketing communication strategies, so far companies have implemented

integrated marketing communication strategies through advertising in promotional media, sales promotions, customer screen promotions, billboards on mobile cars, and other forms (Hendrayati & Pamungkas, 2020; Nwabueze & Mileski, 2018; Özoğlu, & Topal, 2020; Shaddiq, Iyansyah, Sari & Zainul, 2021; Villanova, Bodapati, Puccinelli, Tsiros, Goodstein, Kushwaha & Hatfield, 2021; Malesev & Cherry, 2021).

In the period 2010 to 2012, the competitive situation faced by PT XYZ Surabaya was quite intense from similar companies, especially competition in terms of selling prices and marketing communication activities that were quite high in intensity. Facing such a situation, the problem faced by the company is that the marketing communication strategy has not been well coordinated to support marketing activities and to further strengthen the brand name of PT XYZ.

Based on the background of the problem above, the problems in this study are:

How is the marketing communication strategy in consumer goods marketing activities at PT XYZ in Surabaya? Based on the above problems, several research questions can be formulated as follows:

(1) How can marketing communication strategies support the marketing activities of PT XYZ?

(2) How is the management of marketing communication strategies at PT XYZ?

Theoretical foundation

This research was conducted with the intention of wanting to know the marketing communication strategy in PT XYZ's consumer goods marketing

activities in Surabaya. As well as having the aim of wanting to explain the social problems studied, namely wanting to know the marketing communication strategy in consumer goods marketing activities at PT XYZ in Surabaya (Duralia, 2018; Krizanova, Lăzăroiu, Gajanova, Kliestikova, Nadanyiova & Moravcikova, 2019; Song, Moon, Chen & Houston, 2018; Kasim, Stöhr & Herzig, 2021).

The main framework used in the research is the concept of marketing communication.

Marketing communication can also be stated as communication activities that aim to convey messages to consumers using various media, with the hope that communication can produce three stages of change, namely changes in knowledge, changes in attitudes, and changes in desired actions (Falihat, Ramayah, Soto-Acosta & Lee, 2020; Heo & Muralidharan, 2019; Varadarajan, 2020; Bilgin, 2018; Herawati, Yusuf, Cakranegara, Sampe & Haryono, 2022; Mugione & Penaluna, 2018).

Marketing communication is also a form of communication that aims to strengthen marketing strategies, in order to reach a wider segmentation. This study can also be said as an effort to strengthen customer loyalty to products, namely goods and services owned by the company. What a marketer needs to understand is that the success of a marketing communication strategy can be measured by how much sales of a product or income from the use of services by consumers. While Kennedy and Soemanagara (2009: 5) explains,

marketing communication activities are marketing activities that use communication techniques that function to provide information to many people so that company goals are achieved and there is an increase in revenue for the use of services or purchase of products offered (Amin & Priansah, 2019; Veleva & Tsvetanova, 2020; Kurdi, Alshurideh, Akour, Alzoubi, Obeidat, & Alhamad, 2022; Hartanto, Firmansyah & Adhrianti, 2022; Oscarius Yudhi Ari Wijaya, Sulistiyani, Pudjowati, Kartikawati, Kurniasih & Purwanto, 2021; Redjeki & Affandi, 2021).

In other words, marketing communication is a form of communication that aims to strengthen marketing strategies, in order to reach a wider segmentation. In addition, marketing communication activities are activities aimed at introducing, establishing, or creating interactions between companies and business partners and consumers, and these activities, are an effort to communicate companies, products, and services to external parties such as business partners, suppliers, and consumers (Kursan Milaković, 2021; Belanche, Casaló, Flavián & Ibáñez-Sánchez, 2021; Morgan, Whitler, Feng & Chari, 2019; Son, Kim, Lee & Ahn, 2019; Maity & Sandhu, 2021).

According to Schultz in Alifahmi (2005: 14), Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) is communication between marketers and customers, in the form of efforts to talk to people who buy or do not buy products. This means inviting a response, not just a monologue

effort, but also responsibility for the results. Meanwhile, according to DeLozier (1966) in Alifahmi (2005: 14), marketing communication is a continuous dialogue between buyers and sellers in a market arena. Nickels (1984) calls marketing communication a two-way exchange of information and persuasion that allows the marketing process to function more effectively and efficiently. Meanwhile, William F. Arens (1996) in Alifahmi (2005; 14) defines IMC as the process of establishing and strengthening mutually beneficial relationships with employees, customers, and all related parties by developing and coordinating strategic communication programmes to enable them to make constructive contracts with companies/product brands through various media. Specifically, (Tom Duncan, 2002; Estaswara, 2008; Adli & Alfikri, 2022; Kasauli, Wohlrab, Knauss, Steghöfer, Horkoff & Maro, 2020; Luederitz, Caniglia, Colbert & Burch, 2021; Lee, Saunders, Panteli & Wang, 2021).

Methodology

3.1. Research design

This research stage begins with collecting data by observing the field, namely PT XYZ. The research method used is qualitative research with a case study approach, which is to find or explore problems from one case to get a comprehensive and in-depth picture of the Integrated Marketing Communication Strategy carried out by PT XYZ in marketing consumer goods products to consumers. Researchers interviewed key informants to obtain information

about PT XYZ's marketing communication strategy in consumer goods marketing activities.

3.2. Data Collection

Data collection in this study by conducting observations, interviews with key informants, and documentation studies. Research data from interviews were recorded and recorded through direct observation techniques and in-depth interviews. Documentation was also used as a supporting data collection technique. Observations were made by researchers on the forms of marketing communication used, including advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, publicity, and events. Many interviews were conducted in the position of the informant at his institution to obtain data on marketing communication strategies implemented by the company. The results of observations and interviews obtained from key informants were then collected after data reduction. Data reduction is the selection of data that is relevant to the research problem and is carried out continuously during the research process. At this stage, after the data is sorted out and then simplified, unnecessary data is edited in order to provide a later appearance, presentation, and temporary conclusions. In the data analysis process, the three stages above, namely data reduction, data presentation, and verification take place simultaneously with the data collection process. After completing the presentation of data, drawing

conclusions is carried out as an activity of a complete configuration.

3.3 Data Analysis

Triangulation In the process of checking the reliability and validity of data, researchers use triangulation, which is a data validity-checking technique that utilizes something else (Moleong, 2006). According to Denzin in Moleong's book, there are four kinds of triangulation as a checking technique that utilizes the use of sources, methods, investigators, and theories. In this study, the authors used a triangulation technique that utilized the use of sources, meaning comparing and cross-checking the degree of trustworthiness of information obtained through different times and tools. That is by way of:

1. Comparing what informants say in this case the Marketing Manager and Head of Promotion of PT XYZ with customers.

2. Comparing the results of interviews from the Director, Marketing Manager, and Head of Promotion with PT XYZ customers to find out whether there are marketing communication activities carried out by the company so far. In addition to using sources, researchers also use triangulation techniques that utilize theory.

According to Paton (1987) cited by Moleong (2006), based on the assumption that checking the degree of trust can be carried out and it is called a rival explanation. Therefore, researchers will do:

1. Asking a wide variety of questions

2. Checking it with various data sources

Findings

Based on the results of observations, in-depth interviews, field observations, and analysis of marketing communication strategies at PT XYZ, it can be stated that in building its marketing communication the company uses forms of marketing communication such as advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, publicity and marketing events. Of the various forms of marketing communication used, it turns out that personal selling is an important partner that cannot be replaced by other forms of marketing communication because personal selling can produce two-way communication through face-to-face activities with potential customers in person-to-person communication. In more detail, the results of the author's research are described below. The analysis that the researcher did was to use the SOSTAC method which is a strategy developed by Paul R. Smith, containing a summary of the stages that must be involved in marketing strategies from the development strategy to the implementation stage. The SOSTAC stages can be summarised as follows:

S - Situation Analysis, which means where we are now

O - Objectives, the goals we will achieve

S - Strategy, the way to achieve the goal

T - Tactics, aspects of the strategy

A - Action, implementation, or

application

C - Control, measure, monitor, and examine the activities undertaken.

Tactics are detailed activities as an implementation of the strategy that the company has set. The tactics applied by PT XYZ are the marketing communication mix in the form of advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, publicity, events, and direct marketing.

Advertising Activities

Advertising is a form of communication that uses a form of mass communication through the media. Advertising or advertising as a form of marketing communication programme that is more focused on providing information or knowledge and persuasion of the audience about products or companies through paid mass media generally puts forward the advantages of the product for meeting the needs of the audience. So far, PT XYZ's advertising activities have been supported by brand-holder companies or principals that already exist in the market. This is quite reasonable because, by marketing products whose brands are well known, the company also benefits greatly because the company's name is quickly recognized by customers by carrying well-known products or brands, customers are more calculating and very dependent on PT. XYZ.

Sales Promotion Activities

Recently, sales promotion has been widely used to stimulate people to make purchases. Promotion plays a very important role in product

marketing because promotion has the ability to arouse the interest of all people who are targeted to be moved to make purchases. With a well-planned promotional strategy which includes the use of appropriate communication techniques and media, the information and influence desired from the implementation of a promotional strategy carried out by a company will be achieved. Realizing the importance of promotion as a means of disseminating information about a product from the company to the public. PT XYZ builds marketing communication through a promotional strategy that is expected to create an effective communication relationship in order to communicate products to consumers.

Personal Selling Activities

As a company that markets consumer goods products, PT XYZ relies heavily on personal selling because it is easier to provide complete information to consumers. So communication built through personal selling is much more able to understand what consumers want. Communicating products does not have to be in the form of words, or symbols but messages can be conveyed in the form of services provided by marketers. Personal selling is a form of communication that deals with consumers face to face and improvisation of sales using person-to-person communication. In marketing communication, personal selling is an important partner that cannot be replaced with other promotional elements. At PT XYZ,

personal selling activities are usually carried out by sales or salespeople under the auspices of sales managers who promote products directly to target markets. Information from personal selling is adjusted to the context of the consumer environment, delivered and product demonstrations can be carried out to foster their trust in the products we offer. Therefore, in personal selling, a sales role is needed, which the company realizes can support promotional activities in the form of event marketing and sales promotion. Personal selling itself is carried out by PT XYZ to attract potential customers to buy the products offered in order to increase sales. The company realizes the existence of salesmen to do personal selling because personal selling can produce two-way communication through face-to-face activities with potential customers. This is also effective when salespeople make visits to wholesalers, retailers, and traditional shops which are quite numerous around East Java. Marketing communication carried out by these salespeople is quite effective in encouraging consumer purchases. Personal selling activities carried out by PT XYZ as one of the marketing communication activities, go through several stages:

1) Attention (attention)

At this stage, the marketing communication objective of salespeople is to put their target consumers at the acceptance stage. Some of the behaviors of informal communication carried out by

salesmen are: - Shake hands warmly - Always smile in the face of consumer questions - Be a good conversationalist, show your interest - Use formal calls, such as Mr or Mrs - Control your emotions, don't be too pushy, and be patient.

2) Interest

At this stage, the goal of personal selling is to attract the attention of target consumers, so that consumers can have a strong interest in PT XYZ products. Some of the behaviors of salespeople at this stage are: - Recognise the behavior of target consumers, whether they are starting to be interested in the products offered. - The subject of the salesperson's conversation should be related to issues around products or goods that sell well, new products, competing products, and others. - Observe the mental state or mood of consumers who are targeted for sales. - Salespeople must position themselves as representatives of the company, for example in company uniforms with the Expand symbol.

3) Desire

At this stage, salespeople must have the ability to be able to answer any questions from customers and this is important to convince consumers to feel confident in the reputation of the products offered by the company and that the products that consumers buy are the right choice in the eyes of customers. Therefore, the role of sales supervisors and promotional staff must be able to provide extensive product knowledge for salespeople so that competence as a

salesperson can satisfy and convince customers.

4) Action

After the salespeople of PT XYZ are able to create an atmosphere of marketing communication that can generate consumer confidence and trust, consumers will likely order and buy the products offered. About personal selling activities carried out by PT XYZ, the benefits obtained from marketing communication through personal selling are that personal selling activities are able to create a marketing communication activity because, in addition to two-way communication interactions between sellers and buyers, personal selling is also able to explain the products offered clearly and convincingly so as to influence and persuade buyers to buy the products offered. Personal selling by salespeople can also find out more easily what the needs of target consumers are. Given that PT XYZ is a distributor company engaged in consumer goods, the role of personal selling as a person who carries out promotional activities to customers is very important.

Marketing Event Activities

Marketing event activities are carried out at modern retail outlets such as hypermarkets, supermarkets, Indomaret, and Alfamart. The marketing event programme is carried out within a limited time frame such as when modern retailers hold price-slashing promotions or low prices, PT XYZ participates in the event. Routine exhibition activities

are carried out when there are promotional events such as the Surabaya Fair, or activities in the Chinatown area (Semawis) ahead of Chinese New Year. Exhibitions are also held at stores that hold special sales of household appliances for example or parcel exhibitions ahead of Lebaran or Christmas.

Discussion

Discussion of Marketing Communication Strategy of PT XYZ in Marketing Consumer Goods Products Marketing communication used by PT XYZ in introducing and marketing consumer goods products with the installation of mobile advertising car panels and banded products, the existence of discount prices, promotions in customer displays, advertisements on local television, fairs, display arrangements in supermarkets, joint exhibitions with principals (Nutrisari producers, tropicana slim, Hi-lo, L men, WRP and others). Marketing communication activities with advertising are widely supported by brand holder principals, for example, Tropicana Slim product advertisements are carried out by PT NFI, Inaco porch advertisements on MNC TV are carried out by PT NU as the owner of the Inaco brand, Quantum gas stove TV advertisements featuring Andre Taulani as the brand ambassador is carried out by PT Adi, Kusuka cassava chips advertisements are carried out by PT Ari. In line with the opinion of Rossiter & Percy (1998: 3), advertising communication is often referred to as

a relatively indirect form of persuasion (soft-sell), based on the appeal of information or emotions about the benefits of the product, which is designed to create a pleasant mental sense that turns the mind towards sales. Integrated Marketing Communication programme: a communication application that aims to assist a company's marketing activities. Marketing communication also aims to strengthen marketing strategies, in order to reach a wider segmentation. In addition, marketing communication activities are activities aimed at introducing, establishing, or creating interactions between companies and business partners (suppliers as investors) and consumers, and these activities, or an effort to communicate companies, products, and services to outsiders (business partners, suppliers, and consumers).

Selection of Publication Media and Forms of Marketing Communication. In its marketing communication activities, PT XYZ uses publication media in the form of outdoor media (outdoor promotion) such as retailer promotions, trade-oriented promotions, and customer-oriented customers. Meanwhile, non-media communication is carried out using personal selling, namely sales or salespeople to conduct face-to-face meetings with consumers. Personal selling is used so that dialogical conditions can be created between sales as communicators and consumers as communicants face-to-face. This is following the opinion of

Soemanagara (2006) according to which in face-to-face communication, there are two types of feedback, namely immediate feedback or response obtained immediately and delayed immediate feedback or response obtained immediately and delayed feedback or delayed response from communicants. Delayed feedback occurs when consumers want to learn the main purpose of the message conveyed by the communicator and allows a response to the message to occur later than expected. This is what should be avoided by sales of PT XYZ when explaining about the products offered or new products that will be marketed in the future. The benefit obtained from marketing communication through personal selling is that personal selling activities are able to create a marketing communication activity because, in addition to two-way communication interactions between sellers and buyers, personal selling is also able to explain the products offered clearly and convincingly so as to influence and persuade buyers to buy the products offered. Hans Ouwersloot and Tom Duncan (2008: 12) suggest:

"Personal selling is interpersonal communication in which a salesperson uncovers and satisfies the needs of a customer to the mutual benefit of both. In many business-to-business (B to B) categories, personal selling is the dominant marketing communication function".

Because PT XYZ's customers are

mainly Hypermarkets, supermarkets, and modern retailers, personal selling is suitable to be used as the main strategy in marketing communication activities, and as stated by Ouwersloot and Duncan (2008), personal selling is interpersonal communication in which the seller uncovers and satisfies the needs of a customer, which can mutually benefit both parties.

In many business-to-business (B to B) categories, personal selling is the dominant function of marketing communications. In carrying out its marketing communications, PT XYZ focuses more on the Below The Line strategy, and its implementation in the field is easier because it can be carried out in distribution channel places that provide PT XYZ products, while Above The Line strategies are mostly carried out by Principal or brand holder companies.

Based on the results of observation, documentation, in-depth interviews, and analysis of marketing communication strategies at PT XYZ Surabaya, it can be stated that in building marketing communication PT XYZ uses communication tools such as advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, publicity, and marketing events. To anticipate future marketing communication strategies, PT XYZ also designs creative marketing communication models such as the use of Walking Cars with the "EXPAND DISTRUBUSI" Logo to position PT XYZ as a Consumer Goods distributor company and Market Leader in Surabaya. The company is also aware

that to develop marketing communication strategies in the future, it needs to consider advances in Information and Communication Technology such as the use of Facebook, Twitter, Email, and others to support its marketing communication activities.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the marketing communication strategy used by PT XYZ, the company uses various forms of marketing communication such as advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, publicity, and marketing events. In carrying out its marketing communication activities, the company gets a lot of support from principal companies or well-known brand holders. The Below The Line promotion strategy is carried out at distribution channel locations that provide PT XYZ products, while Above The Line promotions are mostly carried out by brand holder companies or principals. As for promotions that use non-price strategies or non-price competition, PT XYZ often participates in exhibition activities or promotional events in collaboration with brand owners or principals.

Advertising activities are aimed at increasing brand awareness of PT XYZ products through the use of local newspaper media and it turns out that product display on mailer catalogs that are widely published by hypermarkets, supermarkets, and

modern retailers is useful for supporting the company's product promotion activities. This is in line with PT XYZ's vision to market consumer goods products that are already known by the public so that it is easier to market them. PT XYZ also does not use billboards because every product it markets has been advertised by the brand holder factory or principal and another consideration is that billboards have a very limited reach.

Marketing communication activities using personal selling are very important because personal selling is responsible for products that are exclusive to certain brands or personal selling for products that mix or mix all goods. Personal selling is needed in supporting marketing communications because some products marketed require explanations and demonstrations of images, photos, or descriptions, information on new products, new specs, product advantages, making deals with customers, and others. To reach modern market customers such as hypermarkets and supermarkets, personal selling is needed for taking regular orders, for example when a salesperson communicates with the head of a modern market to talk about space rental, bonus sales, sales with special discounts, and others. It turns out from the results of the interviews conducted, that personal selling is the spearhead of the company because they act as representatives of the company at the level of the front marketing area and

greatly determine the size of the orders obtained. To be able to communicate well with customers, before being deployed to the field, they are generally given training by the principal company or brand holder, namely on exposure to product strengths and weaknesses, sales skills training, product knowledge, and ways to overcome customer problems with new products. Communication training is also given to salespeople every year and training is carried out by bringing in outside speakers for sales target review material, salesmanship briefings, promotional strategies, overcoming customer complaints, customer satisfaction, and others.

Sales promotion activities are carried out by exhibiting PT XYZ products when there is a Surabaya Fair event or an exhibition in the Chinatown area (Semawis) ahead of Chinese New Year, and in specialized shops for household appliances, parcel product exhibitions ahead of Eid at hypermarkets and supermarkets. In choosing the location of sales promotion, the company chooses a place with a lot of traffic or crowded customers or crowded stores such as supermarkets in Surabaya, and is quite famous for being always crowded and cheap. The company also holds sales promotions at cheap market events in big mosque squares, cheap markets at government offices, and others. What is interesting from the various sales promotion activities carried out by PT XYZ is that the company often

conducts joint exhibition activities with PT NFI (Nutrisari Producer, Tropicana Slim, Hi-Lo, L Men, WRP, and so on), Marimas Producer Company, Quantum Gas Stove, Inaco Jelly, Kusuka cassava chips.

Publicity activities are rarely carried out by PT XYZ because the company has customers who are not direct end users or end consumers but sell more to wholesalers, hypermarkets, supermarkets, and retail stores. As a strategy for positioning and publicity to customers, the company displays the Expand Distribution logo on the company's box cars which function to send ordered goods within the city of Surabaya or around the East Java area. All PT XYZ transport fleets use the Expand Distribution logo in order to be better known by the main customers and principal companies or brand holders and the general public so as to create a positioning that Expands is a distribution company. With the increasingly recognized name Expand, it will further strengthen its marketing communication strategy and become more famous for its brand name.

Promotional event activities are carried out by participating in low-price programme events in modern markets such as Carrefour, Giant, Hypermarket, Supermarket, Indomaret, and Alfamart. Generally, this kind of promotional activity is carried out ahead of the Lebaran or Chinese New Year holidays.

Of the various forms of marketing communication

implemented by PT XYZ, personal selling is an important partner that cannot be replaced by other promotional elements. The ability of personal selling is able to improve from sales with person-to-person communication. In carrying out their duties, PT XYZ salespeople must be able to demonstrate the advantages of the company and the products being sold and provide information on how customer needs can be met. The power of personal selling is able to explain the company's products in detail, inform new products, product specs, product advantages, and deal with customers. Observations in the field, salespeople sometimes communicate with customers using local language (Javanese) and this is done solely to build intimacy between salespeople as company representatives and customers or retailers. Salespeople realize that the use of local language can facilitate adaptation to the culture of local customers so as to create intimacy between the two.

Managerial Implications

Based on the above conclusions, there are several implications that can be implemented, namely:

Marketing communication strategy should be made by the marketing manager who is directly responsible to the Director. Marketing communication strategy planning is made by starting to do marketing research, strategic planning, implementation to evaluation, and if

possible post research can be done.

To overcome weaknesses in marketing communication strategies, especially in planning, it is necessary to make a product promotion plan that is scheduled and follows the available promotion budget.

Cooperation carried out with brand holder principals in promotional activities needs to be expanded such as sponsorship activities, billboard installation, and others.

To assist the Marketing Manager in developing a marketing communication strategy plan, that can involve an event organizer as an executor or as a contributor of creative ideas.

Limitations

The author can provide some limitations as follows: 1. The results of this study can provide a new idea for other researchers who are interested in quantitatively finding out how marketing communication strategies affect sales results. Future research can also be extended to aspects of marketing communication strategies that specifically observe aspects of marketing communication for Above The Line and Below The Line. To develop a more comprehensive marketing communication programme, it needs to be tailored to each market segment for both modern and traditional markets so that it is right on target and can satisfy customers. Considering that personal selling is an important partner that cannot be replaced with other

promotional elements, marketing managers need to manage, motivate, and train the communication skills of salespeople so that they can be skilled in communicating in their role as salespeople.

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