

EXCELLENT SERVICE AND PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGY OF PT. ACE HARDWARE IN THE ERA OF SOCIETY 5.0

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Abstract

This study aims to explain how excellent service for the implementation of the Public Relations function and Public Relations Strategy is carried out by the ACE Hardware company to customers in the Society 5.0 era. The methodology used is descriptive qualitative. Kotler and Keller theory is used to analyze PR Strategy which has seven (7) concepts as indicators; a) publication, b) sponsorship, c) event, d) talk, e) news media, f) identity, and g) social activities, while the analysis of Excellent Service is taken from the Rangkuti theory which has three (3) concepts as indicators; a) developing services, b) meeting expectations, c) maintaining and maintaining customers facing the Society 5.0 era, in this case using the Omni Channel (an application launched as a form of digital transformation in increasing the convenience of consumers in shopping and accessing ACE Hardware products). The importance of the role of digital content is also considered because the high level of use of social media makes people closer to the online world. Data collection was carried out through an in-depth interview process with other supporters from literature reviews, literature, books, journals, the internet or those relevant to this research. Data analysis was carried out using a coding process (open coding, axial coding and selective coding). The results of the study show that ACE Hardware Company has implemented a Public Relations (PR) strategy based on the theory of PR strategy and excellent service, by maximizing the use of omni-channels in the era of Society 5.0.

Keywords: *Public Relations, Public Relations Strategic, Excellent Service, Society 5.0*

1. INTRODUCTION

A task that adds value to services is offering exceptional service, which is necessary in order to meet the expectations of customers. Because it satisfies the requirements that the provider set down for a great level of service, it is considered to be the highest quality (Pamekas, 2021).

Building relationships with customers and developing good two-way communication go hand in hand with providing exceptional customer service. Prof. Dr. Ali Liliweri claims in a book that the goal of communication is a target that must be attained in order to feel satisfied (Liliweri, 2017). The target in this situation is customer satisfaction, so providing outstanding service is a company goal that must be met.

In general, every business employs a plan to increase customer pleasure, build trust and loyalty, and develop a sense of security. Customer happiness is significantly impacted by pricing and service quality, according to the study of the partial test and the simultaneous test findings (Gofur, 2019). The basic objective of public relations is to enable businesses to continue providing exceptional customer service.

Therefore, the company's communication strategy needs to change to reflect the times (Edelia & Aslami, 2022). Society is currently experiencing the industrial era 4.0, during which time digital technology is advancing quickly. However, humans are also beginning to transition into the Society 5.0 Era with rising technical sophistication in the middle of this 4.0 Era. People therefore require knowledge of expected job growth in the Society 5.0 age so that it can be adjusted to changing technology (Risanti, 2019).

The Industrial Era 4.0 also makes use of technology, fresh ideas from the internet, virtualization of the actual world, digital mapping, and the fusion of technical and business processes within the organization (Hendarsyah, 2019). Big data analytics uses extensive data collecting methods from many customers to optimize the company from numerous angles, therefore it's not surprising that companies began adopting them in industry 4.0.

In Society 5.0, a new value of innovation is developed to erase gaps in terms of geography, age, gender, and language by enabling the best services and products to meet the requirements of a wider range of people (Hendarsyah, 2019).

Additionally, many businesses saw a sharp decline in revenue during the Covid-19 pandemic, which was brought on by both government regulations and a decline in consumer interest in making direct purchases of goods. These regulations also necessitated the temporary closure of several significant businesses, including malls and large retailers. In these circumstances, Public Relations has a critical role to play in adapting and making strategic changes during the COVID-19 epidemic to keep the business afloat.

Many businesses are relying on online commerce during this pandemic. In accordance with the demands of the market segment, innovation must be put into practice within a set period of time. Similar to what ACE Hardware did by introducing an interactive service as a shopping solution. Since 1995, this Indonesian branch of the American hardware retailer ACE Hardware has been selling goods for the house and way of life. Utilizing internet technology puts those involved in the retail industry in competition with many other sectors. A PR plan design that is compatible with the most recent communication models is required. Both retail and online shopping are examples of employing omni channels.

An application called Omnichannel was introduced as a way to increase consumers' shopping convenience through digital transformation. Because social media is so widely used and because it brings individuals closer to the online world, the significance of digital content is also taken into account. The developments made by the digital content sector foretell how the sector will grow in the Society 5.0 era when decision-making will increasingly be influenced by information from content (Sugiono, 2020).

The adoption of social media as the primary channel of communication has an impact on marketing as well. To implement unique inventions that promote the direction of digitization, the retail sector must be more imaginative. With the restrictions of class and use, society 5.0 brings the link between humans and technology even closer. The general populace is transitioning to a digital age in all facets of life.

In order to accomplish shared goals and objectives, public relations play a part in defining the organization's or company's performance. Public relations play a systematic position in a company's management tools (Ardhoyo, 2013).

In order to boost productivity in line with business objectives, Public Relations offers the greatest service to firm employees who work through the supply of job motivation, engagement, and accountability.

Two issues can be raised based on the description above, namely: 1) how the exceptional service is being implemented as the Public Relations role at the PT ACE Hardware company in Era Society 5.0. 2) How does PT ACE Hardware implement its PR strategy to retain top-notch customer service in the Era of Society 5.0?

The goal of the study is to determine the level of great service provided by the ACE Hardware firm in Society 5.0 as the Public Relations function and Public Relations Strategy are implemented.

The research's practical usefulness is that it offers some suggestions for how the business PT ACE Hardware can continue to serve its clients well in Society 5.0, particularly in the Public Relations department. While the theoretical advantages include adding to our understanding of public relations and providing references for future research, they also serve as a foundation for academics, particularly the Department of Public Relations.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Previous Research

According to Madiistriyatno & Setiawan (2021) a study on Improving Work in Health, Motivation, and Excellent Service demonstrate that a successful work program can be achieved with good performance, excellent service, and motivation. Performance on the job is determined by accomplishment. A performance can be considered a success if it meets the criteria of a predetermined set of success indicators.

Furthermore, according to Harianja & Wihardi (2018) a study on The East Public Relations Strategy in Realizing Excellent Service at PT. Net Mediatama Indonesia reveal that effective customer service consists of three key components: attitude, attention, and action. Customers are first made to feel comfortable by attitude, and customers will also investigate every service offered. Second, great service that prioritizes the needs of the customer is a way that attention is returned. The third action is one that offers services with prompt and suitable activities to help clients reach their objectives and find solutions.

Moreover, Pranabella & Puspasari (2021) on Public Relations Strategy in Improving Company Image highlight that the ability of a public relations officer to manage a company community while being involved in or caring about the community. Taking an active role in the community can help business actors develop their brand and create numerous partnership opportunities. A program designed to be useful and advantageous to both communities and businesses, community involvement is not a commercial program (Pranabella & Puspasari, 2021).

To support the claim with the supporting evidence, this study cites a number of periodicals with related discussions which utilizing a PR approach and the Society 5.0 philosophy. In order to define the approach for boosting education public relations in Society 5.0, according to Daryono & Firmansyah (2021). This study's findings can be used to demonstrate how PR tactics are applied in a digital setting. In order to accomplish it, technology and information must be used in both direct and indirect ways.

Meanwhile, the discussion of demonstrating the connection between management strategy and public relations is covered in Tam et al. (2020). New empirical data and the contribution of public relations to strategic value were discovered by research by the International Association of Business Communicators Research Foundations. Conditions

where communication from organizations and public relations contributes to organizational performance.

Investigating the Public Relations Strategy and providing outstanding service are the objectives of this study and the 4 (four) references above have similarities. The ACE Hardware Company, a retailer operating in the midst of Society 5.0, is the subject of the study this time, which is different from the subjects of the earlier studies.

2.2. Excellent Service

Excellent service, according to Daryanto in (Pamekas, 2021), is when a corporation goes above and beyond to meet the demands and expectations of both internal and external consumers. Meanwhile, Rangkuti (2017) highlight that excellent service includes three key characteristics, including: a) excellence service/customer care, which is essentially the greatest service available and is crucial to a company's success. In this instance, repeating outstanding service is never required. This is due to the fact that the organization currently primarily offers development services and that it must evolve in order to continue serving the community by changing its own objectives. b) Excellence Service, signifies that the Company's long-term survival depends on maintaining and growing its client base. c) Sustaining and Maintaining Clients Facing Excellent Service, maintaining and sustaining clients and acquiring new clients to accomplish client satisfaction and business goals (Rangkuti, 2017).

The provision of services to customers with the goal of obtaining customer satisfaction with the services that the company has provided and obtaining potential moderate customers and the company does not feel disadvantaged by the service received is demonstrated by the existing definition of excellent service.

Being able to exceed client expectations is another aspect of giving excellent service. This calls for swift and accurate decision-making on the part of firm personnel when interacting with clients (Rangkuti, 2017).

Public relations and customer service are the two social media knowledge and skill areas that almost half of the sample, or 49.2 percent, rank highest in significance. Production of social media content, social media strategy, and social media analytics come next. This demonstrates that in Society 5.0, providing exceptional customer service is a sign of a company's success or failure (Sutherland et al., 2020).

Excellent customer service offered by businesses can impact client happiness. The cost has a significant role in the measurement as well. Businesses must demonstrate to customers how well they sell value. A company's success in the commercial market may depend on providing excellent customer service (Dhiani et al., 2021). Every organization needs to own good service standards. Customer satisfaction is attained when they receive the company's best service (Bilgah, 2021). Businesses can assess their outstanding service when providing it to better design company strategies. Image of the business is also impacted by customer happiness, particularly via social media reviews.

The perception of individuals connected to a company or a person on things, products, and/or services is known as an image (Rahmadani & Andriani, 2021). The public's perception of the company as a whole and the company's image have a strong association. Through the execution of a public relations plan and ongoing maintenance that is lucrative for the business, the significance of corporate image has a positive impact.

As in Ardianto & Bambang (2021), there are three different types of images that a firm might emphasize, namely: 1. Exclusive image, or the business's capacity to offer clients and customers the best range of benefits 2. The corporation projects an innovative image by introducing new items with models and designs that differ from those already on the market. 3. A cheap image, or the image that a corporation emphasizes when it offers high-quality products at a low price (Andrini, 2018).

The notion from Rangkuti (2017), which is connected to Society 5.0, is used in relation to this study by the researcher. In this instance, it is the greatest way to deliver this excellent service to customers using IoT (Internet of Things) technology created by the ACE Hardware company through an omni channel program.

2.2. Public Relations Strategy

Public Relations is an instrument for establishing public relations with the company. The role of Public Relations is to facilitate communication between the community and the business. Communication formed as a result of the company's public introduction operations. In the establishment of Public Relations, a firm unquestionably requires a Public Relations Strategy that can generate good opinions to enhance the reputation of a community-oriented company (Amanda, 2020). The implementation of the strategy necessitates meticulous planning, as failure to do so will have catastrophic effects on the company's reputation.

In general, Public Relations is responsible for creating and maintaining a welcoming climate for an organization or business. Prior to establishing the Public Relations strategy, it is essential to comprehend strategic management in general and public relations management strategy in particular. Situational theory of Public Relations can aid organizations in recognizing and segmenting PR strategies that impact the organization's survival (Shamsan & Otieno, 2015).

In PR work practices, strategic PR carries out its activities, roles, and tasks in accordance with its path and concept using interrelated components (Martinus & Angelina, 2018). It is essential to describe the actions that are aligned with the organization's strategic objectives in order to concentrate on current and future objectives. A strategic plan that provides a detailed and adaptable map flow as a guide for the organization and its future community relations operations (Shamsan & Otieno, 2015). The implementation of the PR strategy will continue to be guided by the progression of time and the market environment.

According to Kotler and Keller, the primary indicators of a Public Relations plan are as follows: a) publications, b) sponsorship, c) events, d) speeches, e) news media, f) identification, and g) social activities (Kotler & Keller, 2016). These signs are all associated with the communication process. Public Relations can achieve its objectives by establishing relationships and gaining the public's trust. These connections facilitate internal and external communication by constructing a unified corporate image.

Depending on the desired outcomes, a PR strategy may employ a variety of indicators. Each strategy has its own purpose and implementation method. On a regular basis, the company's accomplishment of its goals and results must be assessed through evaluation of the executed plan. In this instance, the researcher employs Kotler and Keller (2016) idea, which is connected to the Internet of Things (IoT), and will be changed into a new artificial

intelligence (Artificial Intelligence – AI) through an omni channel program from Company XX.

2.2. Society 5.0

This study focuses on the era of Society 5.0 for the object that makes the distinction. According to Society 5.0 (Hendarsyah, 2019), human activity is highly reliant on technology. No longer are business interactions customary. The community's activities are already interwoven with smartphones. Digitalization is increasingly becoming a way of life.

With the assistance of the internet, the company's expansion is accelerating. Through digital data, all requests and sales have been consolidated. Currently, humans must be able to follow and comprehend digital. Innovation-driven rapid digital development will intensify commercial competition. Particularly retail businesses in Indonesia that require digital innovation by keeping up with technological advancements. The company's PR strategy includes providing exceptional customer service.



Source: diction.id

Figure 1 Society 5.0

The above figure explains that in Society 5.0, millions of internet-collected data will be transformed by artificial intelligence that takes into account the human element. This artificial intelligence is stored in a container referred to as big data. Massive Data gathered by the Internet of Things (IoT). Where IoT will be transformed into a new artificial intelligence (Artificial Intelligence - AI) that will permeate all aspects of civilization. Era Society 5.0 is anticipated to assist individuals in living more meaningful lives.

The internet has implanted intelligent, interconnected technologies. In the first method, the level of involvement is limited and the usage of the Internet is unidirectional because the primary objective is to spread information and attempt to enhance the company's commercial image. In the second method, however, the level of involvement is high, and the Internet is utilized to facilitate two-way communication and preserve ties by allowing debate and interaction between the organization and its stakeholders. Due to shifting societal dynamics, interactive communication is becoming one of the most crucial information channels for businesses (Andriani et al., 2020).

In relation to this Society 5.0 research, the sophistication of ACE Hardware's Internet of Things (IoT) program is linked to the omni channel initiative.

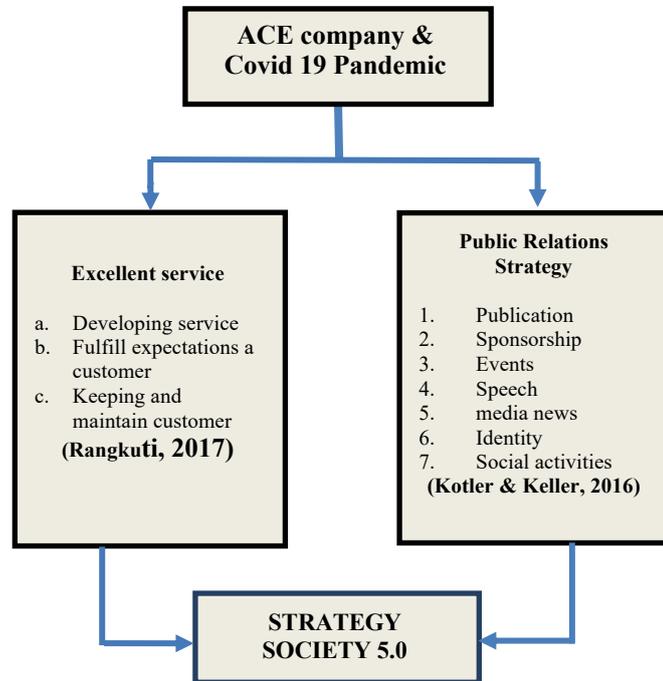


Figure 2 Framework of Thinking

3. RESEARCH METHOD

This study utilized a qualitative technique and descriptive approach. According Taylor and Bogdan in (Rahmadani & Andriani, 2021) that qualitative research is study that yields descriptive data concerning spoken or written language and the observed behavior of the individuals/communities being researched. Descriptive research depicts the real condition of affairs but does not establish causality between variables (Kriyatono, 2012).

This descriptive qualitative technique aims to determine how PT ACE Hardware's public relations strategy for maintaining its retail business in the Society 5.0 age focuses on offering superior customer service. This study collects data through conducting interviews.

From the participant's vantage point, the objective is to comprehend PT ACE Hardware's public relations (PR) strategy for offering exceptional customer service in order to achieve general consumer satisfaction. Through the examination of social reality, which is the subject of this study, this qualitative research also seeks to comprehend the participant's perspective on social reality (Amanda, 2020).

This study used the Miles and Huberman approach for data analysis, which consists of three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions (Faizti, 2021). This research utilizes both primary and secondary data sources. Five (5) resource persons, including both major informants and supporting informants, were interviewed. Primary data were gathered through direct interviews with Mr. Antonius Adi Soetasad as Area Manager, Mrs. Septin Karneli as Store Manager, Mr. Malvin Tarigan as Public Relations personnel,

and two consumers, namely Mr. Yusni and Mrs. Diah, as supporting informants. Meanwhile, secondary data is derived from earlier research through reading, examining, and citing facts pertinent to this study.

In conclusion, secondary data are data gathered indirectly by researchers. Secondary data acts as a supplement to primary data because it is not collected directly. The interview can be conducted by WhatsApp chat or WhatsApp phone. This depends on the circumstances and circumstances of both parties.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The objective of this study is to determine how to provide exceptional service for the implementation of the Public Relations function and Public Relations Strategy, as well as what efforts the ACE Hardware firm makes toward its clients in the Society 5.0 age. Researchers assigned three company employees and two supporting informants as customers. After conducting the interviews, the results and discussions were successfully collected via coding. There are three ideas employed, namely PR Strategy, Excellent Service, and Society 5.0.

4.1. Public Relations (PR) Strategy

The conception of ACE Hardware's public relations approach employs a number of techniques, including dealing with the media, particularly the press as a publication media, via branding. ACE Hardware noted that it is essential to create added value in order for its brand to stand out in the eyes of customers. ACE Hardware public relations team demonstrated its concern through CSR efforts, such as planting one million trees and giving masks during the epidemic.

The PR team of ACE Hardware conducts initiatives in consideration of the social environment, based on client requirements. So that the plan can be developed with the objective of enhancing the company's image. During the pandemic, Society 5.0 will focus on providing exceptional customer service, given the importance of the role of excellent service.

ACE Hardware's Public Relations strategy is founded on seven elements (Supada, 2020): a) publication, b) sponsorship, c) events, d) speech, e) media news, f) identity, and g) social activities. Through interviews with staff and customer informants, two viewpoints on PR ACE Hardware's strategy are developed.

a) Publication

This concept focuses on the role of public relations in developing retail companies through publications, both online and offline.

Antonius explained that:

"The publication media used are conventional and digital. By printing banners in strategic places to using social media such as Instagram, Whatsapp, Tiktok. The use of press releases for publishing articles regarding information and programs from the company. Omni-channel utilization through various applications and online ace for processing customer information. With PR strategic techniques that are carried out specifically, there are direct technicalities and do not see membership."(Antonius Adi Soetasad, 090422)



Source: PT ACE Hardware, 2022

Figure 3 ACE Hardware Application

Supporting informants (customers) also added;

"The intensity of the publications that we see quite often on whatsapp and other social media. However, it is necessary to consistently provide information through ACE Hardware's social media."(Diyah, 270322)

b) Sponsorship

A good sponsor has the same goals and targets throughout the implementation of the program. By considering the mutual suitability of the parties involved, it will facilitate the success of the program being undertaken. Meanwhile, ACE Hardware is developing during the pandemic from shopping offline to online.

Supported by an explanation of the ACE Hardware Gandaria Area Manager

"Due to the change from offline to online especially during the pandemic, the benefit is that the percentage of shopping opportunities is there, thereby increasing sales."(Antonius Adi Soetasad, 090422).

Sponsors support companies to struggle in the pandemic by providing promotional facilities on social media that involve supporting product values. The wider the sponsorship segment, the greater the profit opportunity for the company. The form of sponsorship favored by customers is by giving gifts. With the sponsorship provided, it increasingly influences customers to shop at ACE Hardware. As stated by supporting informants from customers Mr. Yunis and Mrs. Dyah

"There is a gift given to the customer."(Yunis & Diyah, 270322).

c) Events

This concept focuses on an event organized by the company to increase brand awareness and sales of company products.

Events implemented must synergize between costs, time, and events in order to improve service to customers. Massive communication through organizing events can take advantage of the internet and omni-channels for service commitments to customers and product promotions. Especially during this pandemic, the challenges faced by ACE Hardware when the event was held virtually were not being able to interact directly with customers and it was feared that the message conveyed through the event would not be conveyed properly.

Customers also hope that the company can provide complete stock at events and conduct boom sales that interest them.

The following is a picture of the bazaar event held at Menara Mandiri SCBD, April 2022 by Ace Hardware.



Source: PT ACE Hardware, 2022

Figure 4 Event Bazaar

In the current pandemic conditions, events that take place are limited. But still in a targeted strategy. Explanation from Public Relations of ACE Hardware:

"Crowd restrictions that affect the presence of the audience or customer. The way to overcome obstacles is to invite a limited number of potential customers and provide special vouchers for shopping during the event". (Malvin Tarigan, 050422)

d) Speech

This concept focuses on the role of speech in ACE Hardware's PR strategy for communicating with customers.

Speeches can be done digitally delivered via email and social media to all stakeholders namely, customers, the general public and investors. The company's speech plan is a standardization of materials and techniques that have been arranged and prepared as part of the PR strategy at Society 5.0 at the ACE Hardware company. Responses to speeches made so far have been positive, considering the global pandemic conditions and what was conveyed in accordance with the current situation.

This PR strategy is carried out officially and selectively according to the material presented. According to customers, this speech strategy also influences them to shop by focusing on the information received. One of the supporting informants from the customer explained how important speech was to attract him to shop at the ACE Hardware store

"Speech or any kind of information is very important related to products from ACE Hardware, because to find out information when shopping". (Diyah, 270322) interviews with customers.

e) Media News

The role of media news in ACE Hardware's PR strategy and its acceptance by customers. For ACE Hardware's PR team, media news is very influential on customer loyalty because it can affect customer perceptions. The informant as Area Manager of ACE Hardware explained how the PR team managed media news when the company was in trouble by apologizing to the customer, trying to solve the problem by prioritizing the human side, appointing a PIC who was able to handle it, and creating comfort by providing solutions that had a positive impact. This is supported by the existence of a special team that serves customers. Further, Area manager explained that:

"There is a special team to respond to customer complaints, such as via email, or media applications so that customers have more confidence in ACE Hardware". (Antonius Adi Soetasad, 090422)

In order to avoid misinterpretation, media news is at a critical moment when there is credible information to send to the public. Customers are also influenced by the news when they decide to purchase ACE Hardware products.

f) Identify

This concept focuses on the image built by ACE Hardware's PR team in order to have the characteristics of a retail company and customer knowledge of corporate identity.

The identity built by the ACE Hardware company with the aim of creating a strong branding in the minds of customers. By using policies that other retailers don't have, such as 14-day SR, product units, shopping experiences with visible displays finally create a good and comfortable shopping experience. With an explanation from the store manager as a key informant;

"Policies that other retailers don't have such as SR 14 days, unique products, shopping experience with displays that are tied together". (Septin Karneli, 140422)

The PR strategy is to maintain a good corporate identity in the midst of tight retail business competition by utilizing digitalization through the use of tools such as applications. It is proven by the identity of ACE Hardware that is embedded in the customer's mind as a shop or tool company. With a characteristic that is known by customers is the logo and color of ACE Hardware.



g) Social Activities

This concept focuses on the impact of social activities held as a role from the PR strategy of the ACE Hardware company to customer views on social activities needed in Indonesia today. Store Manager of ACE Hardware explained that with social activities;

"The surrounding community directly enjoys the social activities carried out and the approach taken is going well". (Septin Karneli, 140422)

Social activities can be used to enhance the company's positive image and strengthen the brand in the eyes of the public. ACE Hardware company considers an activity by looking at its impact on the public. Hence, these activities are in accordance with the company's vision and mission. Several social activities that have been proven to be effective by ACE

Hardware are carrying out CSR activities such as planting a million trees, distributing masks, and cleaning public areas, such as city parks, places of worship around shops, museums, providing cleaning equipment to janitors or the cleaning service. As a result, the brand is getting stronger through a social activity approach.

CSR ACE Hardware Bantu Baju Hazmat Ke Pemkot Tangsel

Churry — 15 April 2021



Penyerahan donasi 320 baju hazmat dari ACE Hardware ke
Pemerintah Kota Tangerang Selatan, ist

Source: PT ACE Hardware, 2021

Figure 6 CSR ACE Hardware

Another opinion expressed by customers is that currently Indonesia is in need of economic and educational assistance. However, customers still support the form of social activities carried out by the ACE Hardware company.

4.2. Excellent Service

Excellent service has an important relationship to the enforcement of the PR strategy function. With a focus on excellent service to customers, customer satisfaction can be created. Especially, in the midst of the efforts to develop Society 5.0 where digitalization is growing rapidly without limits. The theory of excellent service in Rangkuti (2017) consists of 3 concepts, namely, a) developing services, b) meeting customer expectations, c) being able to maintain and retain customers.

a) Developing Services

This concept explains the company's way of developing services to the form and development of ACE Hardware services according to customers. ACE Hardware's PR team efforts to improve service quality by making improvements to the lack of evaluation results collected from customer information. The form of services carried out such as holding CSR on a regular basis so that it is necessary to convey the services carried out to provide understanding to the community. This includes the achievements given, widely shared with all stakeholders.

The role of the trend can be one of the triggers for the idea of a program. This is also explained by ACE Hardware

"That's right, because the right program or service solution can be seen from the development or trend of information that is currently developing". (Septin Karneli, 140422)

How to develop services also begins with ideas to trends as triggers in program making. One of the right service solutions is seen from the development or trend of information that is currently developing which is very influential for conditions that occur in society. Services with maximum security can also provide comfort for customers and the company's positive image can be well maintained so as to increase customer loyalty.

The form of ACE Hardware service favored by customer informants is the way the staff greets and serves until the transaction occurs until there is a program for each particular member who gets free shipping services with the benefits obtained during the promo. Suggestions are also given for the development of services that need to be carried out such as ease of service of goods, services such as free installation, free shipping if it is over 10 KM of distance, and prizes.

b) Fulfilling Customer Expectations

This concept focuses on the company's efforts to fulfill customer expectations by maximizing existing resources for customer satisfaction.

In meeting customer expectations various factors can be used such as the importance of creating a positive brand perception. The function of products and services that are maintained is an inseparable part in meeting customer expectations and maintaining a positive company image. With the aim to make customers loyal to the company. Regarding customer satisfaction, Area Manager of ACE Hardware explained that they also conducted a survey.

"The results of the SCM survey (customer satisfaction survey), the company every year gets awards from the public or institutions". (Antonius Adi Soetasad, 090422)

Factors that affect customer satisfaction, namely, product quality, good service quality, product prices and easy access to information about products. When customer satisfaction is obtained, it means that it has met customer expectations. When a company is recommended by customers to shop and this can be assessed internally (internal survey assessment) and externally (achievement and recognition). Dominantly, customers said they were satisfied with ACE Hardware's services, especially the friendly staff and solution assistance to the cashier.

c) Keeping and Maintaining Customers

This concept focuses on the concept of the ACE Hardware company in its efforts to maintain and retain customers in Society 5.0 until the competition.

Communication with customers is one of the efforts to maintain and retain customers. Society 5.0 demands the use of media as a company communication facility with the latest internet technology. For example, by using membership, customer service and delivery as a medium of engagement with customers.

The use of print media or press releases for the benefit of articles that can be printed by the media in collaboration with ACE Hardware and can be shared through social media such as corporate CSR activities. Society 5.0 also poses a challenge for ACE Hardware because of the continuous business revolution so that the company seeks to prepare the millennial generation who are able to play a role in the digital world to social relations. It is also important to become a top of mind company where innovation is needed to provide the best

service by utilizing technology. Public Relations ACE Hardware describes the challenges in Society 5.0 as follows

"Companies to remain top of mind where there is a lot of disruption of information and technology that is always evolving. With increasingly strong competition, innovation is needed to provide the best service to customers by utilizing qualified technology".(Malvin Tarigan, 050422)

The company's efforts of keeping and retaining customers, adding to the existence or providing services that exceed customer expectations. With good service through communication and customer loyalty programs to ACE Hardware companies that always innovate with products and services according to customer needs. As a result, customers feel satisfied and recommend ACE Hardware because it has excellent service and complete products.

4.3. ACE Hardware in Society 5.0

The ACE Hardware company makes Society 5.0 a revolution in its business development with the use of the internet in IoT (Internet of Things). Where companies use the internet in the use of media by collecting millions of customer information.

One of them is through the ACE Hardware application that can be used for customer and company communication. ACE Hardware also uses omni channel, which involves various digital platforms that are networked and connected to the company.

With the use of omni channels, ACE Hardware is able to process existing customer information and disseminate information to the public on a massive scale. ACE's PR team also explained that digital omni-channels play an important role in marketing

"The role of digital is very important and can reach wider and more targeted. And the results can be directly measured". (Malvin Tarigan, 050422)

The challenges of Society 5.0 also make retail businesses such as ACE Hardware able to compete and maintain its image. PR strategy focused on millennial generation of human resources with technological capabilities and high social awareness. This is needed for company program ideas that make trends as innovations for customer needs. The implementation of ACE Hardware's PR strategy also uses excellent service as the main factor as a business effort in Society 5.0. The customer is the main target of the business so that it takes not only the form of the product but also the form of the best service in accordance with customer expectations in order to create customer satisfaction.

5. CONCLUSION

On the basis of the above data processing results, it can be concluded that ACE Hardware's excellent service for the implementation of the Public Relations function in the Society era has been operating in accordance with company regulations and has been characterized by the execution of ACE Hardware's planned strategies and businesses. The results of interviews done by researchers with three corporate employees serving as key informants and two customers serving as supporting informants indicate that PR has been operating in two ways, namely offline and online. Especially in this pandemic circumstance,

the company's PR team has begun to increase the use of omni channels to provide exceptional customer service in the era of Society 5.0.

Public Relations Strategies and Efforts in the Society 5.0 era were implemented, namely PR actions focused at enhancing the company's favorable image and maximizing 7 themes, including publication, sponsorship, events, speeches, media news, identity, and social activities. To build customer happiness in the Society 5.0 era, it is essential to force the role of the PR strategy by focusing more on customers in order to provide superior customer service. The relationship is the application of ACE Hardware's seven strategic concepts. In the era of Society 5.0, ACE Hardware is expanding its company by employing the internet in IoT (Internet of Things) and omni channels. As a result, ACE Hardware is able to process current customer data and disseminate it to the public at large.

Researchers advise that ACE Hardware companies might maximize their web presence and facilitate remote shopping for clients. It is hoped that ACE Hardware would be able to give enticing promotions and events to promote brand awareness and sales, such as free shipping on orders under 10 kilometers and routinely performing CSR activities. Therefore, it is also hoped that future study will be able to examine the omni channel function's impact on customer loyalty in greater detail so that customers will make repeat purchases.

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