

Marketing Communication Implementation to Increase Visitors

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Abstract

Kampus Merdeka provides students with opportunities to learn entrepreneurial skills. As part of its implementation, a bazaar is established as a platform for students to gain practical entrepreneurial experience. To optimize this practice, the committee must attract visitors to the bazaar through promotional activities. This research aims to analyze the implementation of promotional activities conducted by the committee using marketing communication strategies. The method employed is qualitative research with a descriptive approach, utilizing primary data sources. The findings reveal that marketing communication strategies executed through advertising, sales promotion, direct selling, and events have been carried out adequately but not optimally, and marketing through personal selling channels has not been utilized, resulting in the failure to reach the targeted number of visitors. It is recommended that promotional activities be intensified with a wider reach, and close collaboration between the committee and participants of the Wirausaha Merdeka program is essential for promoting the bazaar effectively.

Keywords: marketing communication strategy, bazaar, Wirausaha Merdeka, promotion, visitors

INTRODUCTION

Community entrepreneurship activities have become a government program following Presidential Regulation Number 2 of 2022 to ensure that Indonesia achieves the target of creating 1 million new entrepreneurs by 2024. To achieve this goal, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology organizes the Wirausaha Merdeka program through the Kampus Merdeka program to fully support the creation of new entrepreneurs from student groups. The Wirausaha Merdeka program is part of the Kampus Merdeka program initiated by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of Indonesia to provide students with opportunities to learn and develop as prospective entrepreneurs through activities outside the campus. This program collaborates with College Institutions to develop entrepreneurship learning that

builds entrepreneurial spirit and enhances entrepreneurial experience.

Wirausaha Merdeka is a program organized by many universities, including Universitas Padjadjaran, which hosted Wirausaha Merdeka in 2023 with 400 students from all over Indonesia. In its learning process, Wirausaha Merdeka has a Semester Learning Plan that outlines the stages, processes, and learning materials for students over 1 semester. The Semester Learning Plan of Wirausaha Merdeka contains a comprehensive learning plan covering entrepreneurship fundamentals such as self-discovery and fostering entrepreneurial mindset, followed by learning about market analysis, identifying opportunities, using business tools such as the Business Model Canvas, business environment analysis, product creation and validation, and product marketing. The learning process methods include presentations, discussions, projects,

assignments, pitching, workshops, and practical exercises.

In entrepreneurship-related learning, students should have space to stimulate entrepreneurial imagination, risk-taking, action orientation, and work independence because knowledge and technical skills alone are not enough (Nielsen et al. 2021 & Gao et al. 2024). This research will discuss the practice of business simulation in the Wirausaha Merdeka Semester Learning Plan, namely the student product bazaar program facilitated by Wirausaha Merdeka at Universitas Padjadjaran. This bazaar is also called Demo Day, and through Demo Day, students are expected to gain real selling experience, directly serve customers, and promote their products. The committee, along with the Wirausaha Merdeka organizing team, designs and executes Demo Day to ensure smooth operation and achieves the predetermined visitor target during its implementation, which was carried out three times within a two-month period. The target attendance for Wirausaha Merdeka Demo Day 1 was 200, for Day 2 was 500, and for Day 3 was 10.000. The visitor targets set for Demo Day are adjusted according to the venue's capacity, with the hope that students can directly communicate with visitors, practice their entrepreneurial skills, and sell their products.

However, in practice, the expected visitor targets were not met on all three Demo Days. On Demo Day 1, most visitors were Wirausaha Merdeka participants participating in the bazaar, as well as faculty members and educators involved in Wirausaha Merdeka. A small number of visitors were Universitas Padjadjaran students, but they mostly just looked around and did not purchase Wirausaha Merdeka participants' products. Similarly, on Demo Day 2, most visitors were Wirausaha Merdeka participants and organizers, with a small number of Universitas Padjadjaran students and participants of the Pekan Ilmiah Nasional (PIMNAS) that was held during the same period of Demo Day 2. On Demo Day 3, which targeted the highest number of

visitors, the majority were again Wirausaha Merdeka participants, with only a few visitors from Paris Van Java visitors.

The results of the Demo Day, which did not meet the target number of visitors, indicate a lack of information dissemination and marketing efforts for the bazaar in attracting visitors. This research aims to analyze the utilization of marketing communication tools and understand the reasons behind the failure to meet the visitor target, especially in bazaars organized by college students. Through this research, Wirausaha Merdeka or bazaar organizers can use the suggestions and recommendations provided to conduct better marketing through marketing communication that can attract bazaar visitors in the future.

Marketing communication as cited in Kotler & Keller (2016) is a tool used by businesses to remind, inform, and persuade customers about the brands and products they sell, both directly and indirectly. Additionally, marketing communication is a communication process aimed at conveying messages to customers through various media. The goal of this communication is to achieve three stages of change: changes in knowledge, changes in attitudes, and desired behavioral changes (Aditya & Lubis, 2017). The elements of marketing communication consist of advertising, sales promotion, marketing public relations, sponsorship, direct marketing, personal selling, and events. Advertising is a non personal marketing channel about a product, service, institution, or idea by a sponsor with information intended to reach the general public. In his book, Pamungkas (2016) explains that the purpose of advertising is to provide information, persuade, and remind. A good advertisement must have AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) elements (Andriani, 2016). Attention means an advertisement must attract the attention of the target audience, so it should consider the use of visuals, layout, size, and specific sounds that can grab the audience's attention. On interest, an advertisement must pique

consumer interest and be able to turn attention into a deeper desire to know the information provided. Desire means the advertisement must be able to move the audience's desire to own or enjoy the advertised product. Then the last element, action, means that the advertisement must have the ability to persuade the audience or potential buyers to take immediate action, which can be done, among other things, through the placement of call-to-action words.

Sales Promotion, according to the American Marketing Association (AMA), is marketing through media and non-media channels conducted over a certain period to retailers, consumers, or wholesalers to encourage trials, increase demand, or increase the availability of goods. In concept, sales promotion is used to encourage consumers to purchase goods triggered by product offers in a short time (Siregar, 2023). Thus, it can be concluded that sales promotion is the seller's efforts to encourage purchases by providing limited time offers and stimulating sales. Today's marketing world no longer just markets products but also promotes and maintains a good relationship between a product or brand and its customers. Referring to Scriven (2002) that marketing public relations is a new promotional discipline consisting of specialized application techniques to support marketing activities and is referred to by some theorists and writers as a product publicity tool.

Sponsorship is one form of financial or goods support given by a sponsor to individuals, organizations, or events in the form of strategic cooperation where the sponsor provides assistance, resources, or funds for the opportunity to promote their brand, goods, or services. Sponsorship is used to strengthen brand image by enhancing perception to build, change, or improve brand image (Kotler & Keller, 2011). Direct marketing is marketing conducted by directly engaging with customers without intermediaries. Direct marketing allows companies to

communicate with only one target group, and direct marketing has the characteristic that companies use personal data to communicate with them (Orasmäe, 2017). Direct marketing can use channels such as email delivery, telemarketing, direct action, telephone sales, magazines, newspapers, radio, television, and the internet (Hermawan, 2012).

Personal selling is a two-way communication between prospective buyers and sellers designed to accomplish at least three tasks which include identifying the needs of prospective buyers, matching those needs with one or more company products or services, persuading buyers to purchase products (Peter & Donnelly, 2001). In personal selling, buyers and sellers meet face-to-face with sellers offering products tailored to buyers' needs and can be considered successful when products are purchased by prospective customers. Events are marketing communication elements that also involve other elements such as personal selling, sponsorship, advertising, and others. The implementation of events as marketing communication media is done to reach a wider target audience and achieve brand awareness. Event marketing is a very specific communication tool based on direct emotional involvement from target groups, thus positively affecting relationships with specific products or brands (Vítek, 2021). Based on this statement, it can be concluded that with attractive events, a consumer or visitor can have a positive relationship, thus creating interest in the products or events being held.

METHOD

This research employs a qualitative method with a descriptive approach (Doyle et al. 2020). The qualitative method is used to explore and understand the nuances of marketing communication strategies implemented during the Wirausaha Merdeka Demo Day event at Universitas Padjadjaran and their impact on event attendance. This approach allows for a detailed examination of subjective experiences and perceptions

related to the event's promotional activities. The descriptive approach is applied to systematically detail and analyze the marketing strategies and their effectiveness in achieving the desired outcomes for the event (Sunyoto, 2016).

The target of this study is to comprehend the experiences and viewpoints of participants and stakeholders involved in the Wirausaha Merdeka Demo Day, and to explore how the event influences their understanding and engagement in innovation and entrepreneurship. The primary informant for this research is a committee member of the Wirausaha Merdeka Demo Day at Universitas Padjadjaran, who is expected to provide detailed insights into the planning, execution, and impact of the event. Additionally, observations of Wirausaha Merdeka's social media activities are included to gain supplementary perspectives on how the event is promoted and perceived by the public.

The primary instruments for data collection in this study are in-depth interviews with key informants and observations of Wirausaha Merdeka's social

media activities. Interviews are conducted using a semi-structured interview guide to allow flexibility in probing relevant information and to obtain rich narratives of the informant's experiences. Social media observation involves analyzing posted content, user reactions, and discussions related to the Wirausaha Merdeka Demo Day, providing insights into how the event is presented and received by the audience.

Data analysis involves a qualitative assessment of the effectiveness of marketing communication strategies based on the collected data. This includes thematic analysis of interview responses to identify recurring themes and issues related to promotional efforts and visitor engagement. The analysis also involves evaluating the implementation and impact of specific marketing channels, such as advertising and sales promotions, to determine their effectiveness in achieving the event's goals. The findings are then used to recommend improvements and optimize future marketing strategies for better outcomes.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

In delving into the field of entrepreneurship, it is necessary to provide a space for students to directly practice their entrepreneurial skills. Furthermore, the implementation of entrepreneurial practices can also persuade and foster students' enthusiasm for entrepreneurship (Asmawan, 2017). To fulfill this purpose, Wirausaha Merdeka Universitas Padjadjaran provides facilities to students to gain entrepreneurial

experience by selling products they have collectively created with their respective business teams. The sustainability of Demo Day is facilitated by Wirausaha Merdeka through the formation of an organizing committee or Event Organizer (EO) team. The EO team designs Demo Day under the guidance and direction of the Wirausaha Merdeka academic team, starting from the rundown, venue selection, to the promotion of Demo Day (see Table 1).

Table 1. Date, Place, and Target Visitors of Wirausaha Merdeka Demo Day Implementation

Description	Date	Place	Target Visitors
Demo Day 1	8, 9, 10th of November 2023	Alfa X Universitas Padjadjaran, Jatinangor	200 people
Demo Day 2	26, 27, 28, 29, 30th of November 2023	Unit Kegiatan Mahasiswa Barat Universitas Padjadjaran, Jatinangor	500 people

Demo Day 3	15, 16, 17th of November 2023	Paris Van Java Resort Lifestyle Place, Bandung	10.000 people
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The vendors of Demo Day itself are Wirausaha Merdeka students consisting of more than 40 business teams and 400 students who sell and offer more than 40 self-developed business products as a realization of Wirausaha Merdeka learning. In its implementation, Source 1, who is one of the EO team members, stated that "The visitor target was not achieved due to the lack of enthusiasm from the surrounding community, and the number of visitors attending Demo Day cannot be accurately determined because there was no attendance record for the general public." The speaker also added that the low number of Demo Day attendees was palpable, and Demo Day was only lively with the presence of

Wirausaha Merdeka student participants. The number of visitors is one of the parameters for the success of an event (Mustikarini, 2015). Moreover, students rely on Demo Day visitors to practice their entrepreneurial skills.

The cause of this lack of visitors can be examined in terms of promotion to determine whether the efforts made have been maximal in disseminating information related to the organization of Demo Day. Marketing communication strategies with promotional activities carried out by the committee in implementing the marketing of Wirausaha Merdeka Demo Day are listed in Table 2.

Table 2. Marketing Communication Strategy of Demo Day Wirausaha Merdeka Universitas Padjadjaran

Elements of Marketing Communication	Demo Day 1	Demo Day 2	Demo Day 3
Advertisement	-	-	Advertise on Urban Radio 106.3FM and partnered with Bandung area Instagram account such as @folkbdg, @bandung.gigs, @riset.media, @ikutevent, @askedubdg, @infobandungtimur, @eventcampus, @eventkampuscom, @infokabupatenbandung, @cityofbdg, @ikutevent, @cimahi.ku
Sales Promotion	-	200 vouchers distributed to - PIMNAS participants	-
Direct Marketing	Invitations to internal Universitas Padjadjaran parties such as the rector and Badan Eksekutif Mahasiswa Keluarga Mahasiswa Universitas Padjadjaran (BEM KEMA UNPAD)	Invitations to internal Universitas Padjadjaran parties such as the rector and BEM KEMA UNPAD	Invitations to the rector and BEM KEMA UNPAD, Universities of origin of Wirausaha Merdeka Participants, Business practitioners who fill lecture classes, MSMEs partners, business practitioners who have filled Wirausaha Merdeka classes, Bank Indonesia and Dinas Perdagangan dan Perindustrian Bandung
Personal Selling	-	-	-

Event	Talk show, business ideas pitching, fun games	-	Talk show, fun games, fashion show competition, business matching, talent show
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Advertisement

Advertising conducted at Wirausaha Merdeka Demo Day is done with the hope of disseminating information about the event and encouraging the public to be interested in visiting the bazaar. In its implementation, the committee only

advertised Demo Day 3 and advertised through Urban Radio 106.3FM by mentioning the event on the radio and distributing Demo Day 3 posters via Instagram posts of media partners (Figure 1)

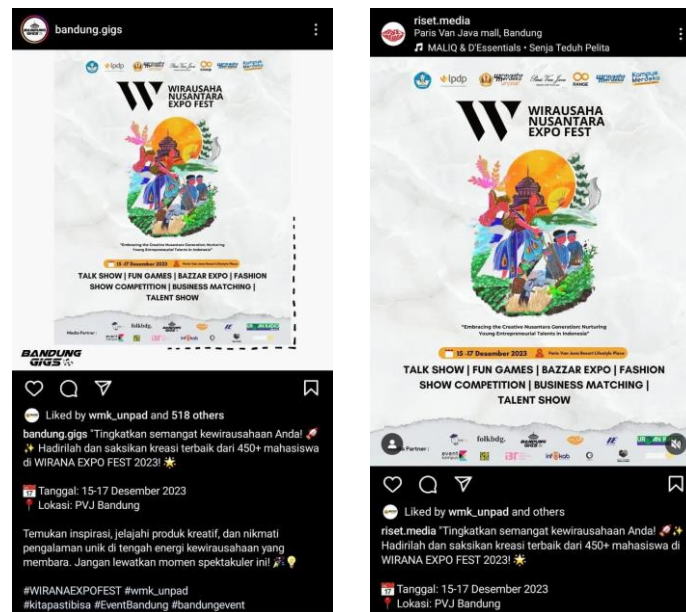


Figure 1. Demo Day Poster Post on Instagram of @bandung.gigs and @riset.media

The Instagram poster uploads by media partners received good engagement, with likes ranging from 50 to 500 on Instagram. This effort by the media partners has been well executed. However, the committee should have collaborated with media partners from the inception of the first Demo Day and should have included more diverse media partners. The advertising objectives of Demo Day were not fully achieved because although the information was disseminated, it did not spread comprehensively and massively according to the target audience sought. In advertising theory, the AIDA elements are required in advertising media to capture the audience's attention. However, with the advertising efforts conducted by the EO team, it appears that only the interest stage

was reached without stimulating the desire of the audience to know more and take action to attend Demo Day. Therefore, advertising should be carried out more creatively, not only by posting feeds on Instagram but also by using features such as video reels and Instagram stories. Advertising should not be limited to Instagram; it should also extend to other social media platforms such as Facebook, TikTok, Twitter, and other social media channels. Additionally, the committee could engage in paid promotions with influencers or local celebrities in Bandung to engage the community.

Sales Promotion

As demonstrated by Ariyanti & Iriani (2022) sales promotion through voucher

distribution can enhance purchases. Therefore, for sales promotion purposes, the committee aims to increase attendance by distributing 200 vouchers during Demo Day 2. This endeavor also seeks to attract attendees from among the students participating in the Pekan Ilmiah Nasional (PIMNAS), which coincidentally occurs during the same period as Demo Day 2 at Universitas Padjadjaran. However, based on the statements of informants, the distribution of 200 vouchers to PIMNAS participants and the PIMNAS committee failed to attract more attendees, as only a few individuals came, mainly due to a lack of awareness regarding the location of Demo Day.

According to Kotler & Armstrong (2008) sales promotion tools comprise coupons, special pricing, product samples, premiums, advertising specialty items, contests, sweepstakes, games, product samples, trade show exhibits, and demonstrations. Research by Lestari (2015) shows that sales promotions help increase sales volume, increase repeat purchases, and increase customer loyalty. The benefits of sales promotion are communication, incentive, and invitation. Since the sales promotion efforts by the Wirausaha Merdeka committee were limited to coupons, it can be inferred that the utilization of sales promotion tools was not optimal in attracting attendees. Thus, the sales promotion tool used is not enough to get those benefits.

Therefore, a recommendation is proposed that the distributed vouchers include information regarding the Wirausaha Merdeka venue and any other pertinent details deemed necessary by prospective attendees. In addition to attracting attendees through vouchers, the EO team, and mentors can also utilize other sales promotion tools such as encouraging the participating teams to directly offer their products to attendees and demonstrate their product. These teams can devise their own product offerings, such as providing discounts or product bundles, thereby

expanding the scope of sales promotion beyond the committee to include the participating teams.

Direct Marketing

The theory from Kotler & Armstrong (2016) suggests direct marketing as a direct and careful relationship targeted at individual consumers to get a direct response from both and can foster good relationships with customers with tools such as telemarketing, face to face selling, and email marketing. Meanwhile, for direct marketing activities, the EO team also sent direct invitations to internal parties such as the rector and BEM KEMA UNPAD for Demo Day 1 and 2. Meanwhile, for Demo Day 3, as it was held outside of Universitas Padjadjaran, invitations were distributed to a wider audience such as the home universities of all Wirausaha Merdeka Universitas Padjadjaran participants, business practitioners who have conducted large classes at Wirausaha Merdeka Universitas Padjadjaran such as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Cancimen Rizky Ananda, CEO Celosia Etnik Valeria Nisatama, CEO Kojo Garmen Faisal, CEO Cerebrum Aditya Pratama Ghifary, and other business practitioners. Invitations were also sent to SMEs partnering with Wirausaha Merdeka and representatives from Bank Indonesia and the Department of Trade and Industry as speakers. This effort was commendable as the invitations sent were quite personalized and directly invited important stakeholders.

Research from Sari & Wijaya (2020) shows that direct marketing through face to face selling also has an impact on marketing. So, the recommendation that can be given is to do face to face selling to market the bazaar and by involving business teams to promote their products directly to customers who have previously purchased their products to generate direct response from potential visitors.

Personal Selling

In terms of personal sales channels, the EO team made no efforts to support marketing initiatives. However, according to Kusniadji (2017) personal selling is more effective in persuading customers compared to other promotional methods because it involves direct interaction with potential customers. As the theory of personal selling emphasizes the involvement of direct interaction, the EO team could engage in personal selling during all three Demo Days by distributing brochures directly in high-traffic areas both on campus and in the vicinity of the Demo Day venue, as well as personally inviting individuals to attend the event. Personal selling efforts need not be limited to the committee; business teams can also engage in personal selling by distributing product testers or brochures promoting their own products.

Event

Research by Rahma (2018) explained that events are able to increase consumer brand awareness of a product so that it is expected to increase product purchases. In the promotional activities through events, the committee implemented them at Demo Day 1, where a series of events such as business pitching, talk shows, and fun games were held. On Demo Day 3, talk shows, fun games, a fashion show competition, and a talent show were also organized. By organizing these events, the committee aimed to liven up the event and attract the attention and participation of both participants and visitors. However, this expectation was not met as only a small number of participants participated, and it did not attract many visitors. The event that was conducted also doesn't raise brand awareness of the event as the initial theory explained.

Based on the author's analysis, the events held were quite appealing with the presence of fun games and a fashion show competition, but the dissemination of information was still not widespread, and

some events such as talk shows and business pitching were not very appealing to students because of their conventional lecture-like concept. This is also why there were no event series other than the bazaar on Demo Day 2, as stated by source 1, "Demo Day 2 felt quiet, and many Wirausaha Merdeka participants were absent, so if we were to organize event series like fun games, not many would participate." Suggestions that can be given are to create more engaging event series such as organizing talk shows with popular and interesting topics featuring captivating speakers. Additionally, the fun games could be enhanced with door prizes to make participants and visitors more enthusiastic about joining the games. The committee can also market the event to the right target audience who are interested in the event, not limited to college students.

There are still many marketing communication strategies that can be implemented to promote Wirausaha Merdeka Demo Day to reach a wider audience, but the lack of promotional activities remains as one of the main reasons for not achieving the visitor target and awareness about Wirausaha Merdeka Demo Day. Furthermore, another contributing factor is the insufficient number of committee members and participants who are unwilling to cooperate in promoting Demo Day or attending the event. Although the Wirausaha Merdeka participants reached 400, only a few actively promoted Demo Day on their social media or promoted their businesses that would be present at the event. It should be optimized if this opportunity is maximized, and students are encouraged and obligated to promote Demo Day, then the information dissemination can be broader and attract public interest. With better execution techniques, more appealing events, and maximized marketing activities, there is a high possibility that the next Demo Day will attract more visitors.

CONCLUSION

While the marketing communication strategies employed through advertising channels, sales promotions, direct marketing, and events were executed with intent, there were notable shortcomings in their frequency and audience reach. The underperformance in marketing effectiveness contributed to failing to meet visitor targets, which in turn hindered the entrepreneurial practice opportunities for student vendors. Additionally, the insufficient involvement of Wirausaha

Merdeka participants in promoting their products further impacted the event's success. To address these issues, it is crucial for the Wirausaha Merdeka Event Organizer (EO) team to enhance coordination with participants, ensuring that marketing efforts are collaboratively managed rather than being solely the committee's responsibility. Such research would not only inform better planning but also provide valuable learning experiences for Wirausaha Merdeka students in research practices.

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