

Public Relation Strategy for Improving the Image of Service Quality at Cemara Asri Pasar Buah Medan

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the public relations strategy for improving the image of service quality at Cemara Asri Fruit Market. The research method used by researchers is descriptive-qualitative research. Data collection was carried out using primary and secondary data, namely leaders at Cemara Asri Pasar Buah and also visiting customers. And the research data was also obtained from previous research, books, and internet sources. This data was collected through observation and structured interviews. Researchers use source triangulation to check the validity of research data. Data analysis in this study uses three components: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results of the study show that the quality of public services at Cemara Asri Pasar Buah has implemented the Tangible, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, and Empathy dimensions and their indicators. However, there are several indicators that have not gone according to the wishes of the community, including the discipline of employees in serving, namely not focusing on serving customers quickly, precisely, and dexterously.

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INTRODUCTION

Starting from the economic, social, and daily life aspects, almost no one can remain unaffected by the impact of the COVID-19 virus. There is no exception to providing public services to a company, whether it is a profit or non-profit company. Therefore, a company always finds various ways to be known by the wider community. This is done so that the company gets a positive image in the eyes of a wide audience and can develop according to their hopes and wishes. So there needs to be good marketing to improve the image of a company. There are many methods used in marketing strategy, one of which is service quality. According to Tjiptono (2020: 180), defines service quality is defined as a measure of how well the level of service provided is able to match customer expectations. (Caroline 2022) Meanwhile, according to Parasuraman et al. (2019: 65), customers perceptions of the

quality of service that customers expect. From the two expert definitions above, it can be concluded that service quality is an important aspect of a company, as is how the company meets the criteria or customer perceptions of the quality provided and the company's efforts to improve the image of service quality. (Novadila Ramadhan 2022)

There are many factors that influence marketing management, one of which is public relations. According to Frida Kusumastuti in Yusmawati (2019: 3), public Relations is a two-way communication activity with the public (the company or organization), which aims to foster mutual understanding, mutual trust, and mutual assistance or cooperation. (Putri Amanda 2020). Public relations is very important for a profit or non-profit company because it has an important role in increasing awareness of the company's brand. With the aim of competing with other competitors and indirectly also binding customers. (Ruslan 2022).

Public relations is a synergy between public relations activities and marketing strategies. (Fitriah 2020) Public Relations is the interaction and creation of public opinion as input that benefits both parties and is a profession that is professional in its field because it is a very important factor in achieving organizational goals properly and continuously because Public Relations is the survival of an organization that is concerned. (Lengkong, Sondakh, and Londa 2017)

Cemara Asri Pasar Buah Medan is a supermarket located on Jl. Cemara Asri Raya Boulevard No. 30 in Medan Estate. A supermarket that sells various kinds of daily needs is equipped with qualified facilities, namely ample parking space and air conditioning, to make customers feel comfortable shopping and choosing what to buy. This supermarket is located not far from where the writer lives, so the writer can interview several customers at Cemara Asri Fruit Market Medan. The results of the interviews show that the quality of service at Cemara Asri Fruit Market Medan is still relatively low and not optimal. Customer A said that the quality of service was still relatively low and not optimal because of the lack of service provided and employees who were still ignorant and did not care. Customer B said that the lack of good relations between employees caused customers to feel annoyed and not get good service. And Customer C said that there were still employees who played smartphones while working, so it took a very long time to respond to customers. From the background of these problems, it is possible to overcome the development of Cemara Asri Fruit Market by improving the quality of service through public relations. The goal to be achieved through the Public Relations task is to create an intimate atmosphere and pleasant interactions between the company and the public. Therefore, Public Relations professionals need to have good communication skills.

METHODS

This type of research is qualitative research. Qualitative research is a research method based on the philosophy of postpositivism, used for research in scientific conditions, (as opposed to experiments) where the researcher is the key instrument, data collection techniques are carried out by means of triangulation (combined), data analysis and are inductive/qualitative in nature, and research results emphasize meaning rather than organization. (Sugiyono 2017)

Place and Time Of Research

The place and time for conducting this research are at Cemara Asri Medan Fruit Market, which is located at Jl. Cemara Asri Raya Boulevard No. 30 Medan Estate. This research was conducted for six months, starting from January 2023 to June 2023.

Type Data Sources Used Are

Broadly speaking, data sources are divided into several groups, including data groups based on how they are obtained, which are divided into two data groups.

1. Primary data
Primary data used in this study were interview respondents, namely regular customers of Cemara Asri Medan Fruit Market who often come to visit about 2-3 times a month.
2. Secondary Data
Secondary data for this research is obtained from theoretical books and also from sources on the internet to support this research.(Sugiyono 2017)

Method Of Collecting Data

Field research (field research): collecting data about the object of research in the field or at the location of the research object. It can be in the form of:

1. Physical observation or observation
Physical observations are made to find out what problems occur. The problem is that the quality of services provided by Cemara Asri Fruit Market is still relatively low and not optimal.
2. The researcher uses a structured interview method where the researcher makes a list of interview questions in advance and finds out the real problems that occur.

Data Analysis Method

The analytical method aims to ensure and confirm whether the method is appropriate or not for its intended purpose. According to Miles and Huberman in Sugiyono (2020: 246), there are three types of activities in qualitative analysis, namely:

1. Data reduction
Reducing data means summarizing, choosing the main things, focusing on the important things, and looking for themes and patterns. Data reduction occurs continuously throughout the life of a qualitatively oriented project. In this study, researchers focused on the field of supervision by looking at the behavior of the people who became supervisors, work methods, workplaces, interactions between supervisors and those being supervised, and the results of supervision.
2. Presentation of data
In this case, the presentation in question is a collection of structured information that allows the description of conclusions and the taking of action. In qualitative research, data presentation is usually in the form of narrative text.
3. Verify conclusions.
From the beginning of data collection, the researcher begins to decide whether to record regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, causal flows, and

processes. In qualitative research, conclusions are new findings that have never existed before.

Data Validity Test

One technique for checking the validity of the data is triangulation. The triangulation technique is a data collection technique that combines various data collection techniques and existing data sources. William Wiersma in Sugiyono (2020: 273) distinguishes triangulation into three types, namely as follows:

1. Source Triangulation, done by checking the data that has been obtained through several sources. The data obtained is in the form of interviews, which may be conducted more than once in a certain period of time.
Example: The author interviewed more than one subject who is considered to have a different point of view.
2. Technical triangulation, carried out by checking data from the same source using different techniques. For example, data obtained by interview is then checked by observation, documentation, or questionnaires.
Example: The author interviewed several sources and also made direct field observations.
3. Time triangulation: this technique often affects the credibility of the data. Data collected using interview techniques in the morning, when the informants are still fresh and there are not many problems, will provide more valid data and be more credible.
Example: Interview results are supported by interview recordings, field photos, and photos of interactions between customers and services. In this study, the triangulation used by researchers is source triangulation. By interviewing several sources, namely customers at Cemara Asri Pasar Buah Medan.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Public Relations duties include five main things, namely as follows: Submit information Public Relations is tasked with organizing and being responsible for conveying information orally, in writing, or through pictures (visual) to the public. So that the public has a correct understanding of the organization or company, its goals, and the activities carried out.

Example: Cemara Asri Fruit Market created a public account as a promotional tool on WhatsApp social media for customers to know more about the company.

Monitor, Record, and Evaluate Responses

Public Relations is tasked with carrying out and being responsible for the environment and community life.

Example: Cemara Asri Medan Fruit Market already has CCTV as a means to see how its customers work and clearly observe how the relationship is applied by employees to customers.

1. Improving the image of the organization For Public Relations, a good image, for example, lies in the form of buildings, presentations, publications, products, etc. However, it actually lies in the following:

How can an organization reflect an organization that is believed to have strength and carry out continuous development that is always open to control and evaluation? It can be said that the image is a picture of a complex component.

Example: Cemara Asri Medan Fruit Market is engaged in fields such as supermarkets, which are suitable for customers of various ages, as well as many products that can be in demand and meet their daily needs.

2. Social Responsibility Public Relations is an instrument to be responsible for all groups entitled to this responsibility. An organization has an obligation to provide social services, which must be their responsibility.

Example: Cemara Asri Fruit Market tries to take full responsibility in the event of negligence in ordering.

3. Communication Public Relations has a special form of communication called reciprocal communication. Therefore, communication knowledge becomes the capital. (Rizky Putra 2021)

Example: Customers make a reciprocal response through direct communication.

Dimension of Public Relation

According to Ruslan in Ardianto (2018: 71–73), the main components of PENCILS in Public Relations are as follows:

1. Publications and publicity (Publication and Publicity)

Every function and task of Public Relations is to organize publications or disseminate information through various media about the activities of companies or organizations that deserve to be known by the public. In addition, Public Relations also generates publicity to obtain a wider positive response from the public.

2. Event (Event Program Arrangement)

Public Relation also designs certain events that are chosen for a certain period, place, and object specifically to influence the public. Usually, there are several types of events, including the following:

Calendar events, which are routine (regular) events that are held in certain months throughout the year.

Special Events, namely events that are special in nature and which are carried out at certain moments outside the routine events of the PR work program.

Momentary Events, namely events or events that are momentary, or more specifically

News (Creating News)

Efforts to create news through press releases, news letters, bulletins, and others usually refer to the 5W+1H (Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How) writing techniques. The systematics of writing are an "inverted pyramid". The most important is placed in the middle of the news bar.

Community Involvement (Care For The Community)

The daily duties of a Public Relations Officer (PRO) are to establish social contact with certain community groups as well as maintain good relations (community relations and human relations) with the organization or institution they represent.

Inform or Image (notifying or grabbing an image)

There are two main functions of Public relations: informing the public or attracting attention so that it is expected to get a response in the form of a positive image. The process from "nothing" to "something". For those who don't know to know, after knowing to like, it is hoped that something will arise, namely in the form of an image.

Lobbying and negotiating (approach and negotiation)

Personal lobbying and negotiating skills are very necessary for a PRO (Public Relations Officer), so that all plans, ideas, or The activities of an institution obtain support from influential individuals and institutions, resulting in a win-win situation.

Social Responsibility (social responsibility)

The aspect of social responsibility in the world of public relations is very important. PR does not only think about profits for the institution or organization and the figures it represents but also cares for the community. This is important so that he gains sympathy or empathy from the audience. This is what, in public relations theory, is called social Marketing. (Ruslan 2022)

Dimension of Service Quality

To find out the quality of service at Cemara Asri Pasar Buah Medan researchers currently choose to use 5 dimensions of service quality, namely: Tangible, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, and Empathy (Tjiptono 2019)

1. Reliability
Carry out the promised services convincingly and accurately, the variables are: Accurate opening hours, politeness of employees.
2. Responsiveness
Willingness to help customers and provide service quickly, the variables are readiness to respond to customer requests and speed of service to customers in experiencing complaints.
3. Assurance
Knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence, the variables are knowledge and skills of employees, effective communication to customers.
4. Empathy
Willingness to pay special attention to customers, the variables are individual attention to customers and attention to customer needs and requirements.
5. Tangible
Appearance of physical facilities, staff completeness, and communication materials, the variables are cleanliness and tidiness

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion at Cemara Asri Pasar Buah Medan that have been put forward, the conclusions in this study are as follows. Tangible Dimensions (Physical Evidence), which have indicators of appearance, convenience, comfort, and use of assistive devices, as well as adequate facilities. However, there are indicators that have not been fully implemented properly, namely the discipline of employees in providing services. Dimensions of Reliability, namely clear standard indicators and the ability and expertise of officers in using assistive devices in the service process, such as in the process of completing payment services. The responsiveness dimension, which has an indicator of responding to every customer who comes shopping and responds to every customer complaint. And indicators that are carried out quickly, precisely, and carefully have not been fully fulfilled to the fullest. Dimension Assurance (Guarantee) indicators that have timely guarantees and guaranteed cost certainty have been implemented in accordance with the wishes of the customer. This is because there are no complaints from customers related to indicators in this dimension. Empathy dimension, namely an indicator that has a sense of empathy in serving, namely by being friendly and polite and there is no discrimination between fellow customers, respecting each customer, has been running smoothly. However, there are indicators that have not run perfectly, namely, prioritizing the interests of customers properly and fairly.

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