



The Implementation of the Public Relations Role at PT Carano Integrasi Teknologi

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Abstract

Public Relations is an activity that is responsible for building and maintaining positive relationships between organizations and the public. PR also plays an important role in improving the positive image of the company and establishing good relations with the public and society. This article analyses how public relations strategies and practices are applied in improving corporate image in private companies. PT Carano Integrasi Teknologi, which was established in 2018, is engaged in IT. Using qualitative research methods with structured interviews, this study finds out how the role of public relations in processing internal and external communications to maintain the company's image that has been built for a long time, building good relationships with stakeholders and also with business partners. The results of this study show that the company can maintain its cooperation with SMKs and universities that have TKJ (Computer Network Technology) majors.

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INTRODUCTION

The company is a business used to generate profit and can be done intensively, involving individuals or businesses that are already legally established in the territory of Indonesia (Dalimunthe et al., 2023). In KBBI itself, a company is defined as an activity carried out systematically with equipment or in an organized manner with the aim of seeking profit.

Every company, organization, or group of people formed with visions, missions, and goals, certainly needs good relationships between producers and consumers. Customer satisfaction in terms of service and quality is one of the goals that various companies or organizations aim to achieve. This is always highlighted to create a positive image that is viewed favorably by the public and involved communities.

In the onslaught of the technological era and rapid globalization, public relations becomes crucial in an organization. PR is a part of the organization responsible for fostering communication and acting as a good bridge with the public and communities. PR plays a key role in shaping the company's image, such as the private company located in Padang City, West Sumatra.

In Indonesia, there are generally two types of companies known: State-Owned Enterprises (BUMN) and private companies. BUMN are companies operated and funded by the state, while private companies refer to privately owned entities or groups of people who hold shares in them and aim to achieve profit for their owners.

PT Carano Integrasi Teknologi (CIT) is a private company established in 2018, specializing in telecommunications infrastructure development. CIT's activities include the construction and development of telecommunication towers, communication poles, and optical cables. Initially located

in South Jakarta, the company expanded and established a branch in Padang City, West Sumatra. To enhance its positive image, CIT collaborates with various vocational schools and universities specializing in Network Computer Technology (TKJ).

The aim of starting CIT's operations was to meet the professional IT needs that were previously only supplied from Jakarta, prompting the owners to establish local IT infrastructure in Padang. CIT's mission is to source and train local workforce talent comparable to Jakarta's standards, especially in fiber optics. The workforce at CIT mostly comprises graduates of vocational schools specializing in TKJ and meets industry standards. CIT's vision is to become a reliable ICT company, particularly in West Sumatra.

This research discusses the role of PR at PT Carano Integrasi Teknologi in Padang and how CIT builds partnerships with clients, creating communication strategies aimed at maintaining good relationships between the company, the public, communities, and clients. Relevant theories are applied to PR strategies within this private company. The goal of this research is to understand how PR plays a role in building a positive image among clients, the public, and the community involved with CIT.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Public Relations

Public relations, or commonly referred to in Indonesian as "hubungan masyarakat," has a distinct meaning compared to its English counterpart. While "hubungan masyarakat" focuses on the community targeted, public relations directs its focus towards other publics with similar interests. This difference in meaning and concept stems from the varied definitions of "public" and "community."

According to the International Public Relations Association (IPRA), public relations is defined as a planned management function performed continuously in various organizations, both governmental and private, aimed at gaining understanding, sympathy, and support from the relevant public. Additionally, public relations is responsible for disseminating information, persuading clients or the public, strategizing to attract public interest, and aiding in understanding various situations (Narti, 2016).

Public relations is sometimes misunderstood by the public or those unfamiliar with its operations. It is often conflated with marketing. Many assume that public relations is identical to marketing. However, fundamentally, the roles of public relations and marketing differ. Public relations, or PR, encompasses communication activities that support marketing efforts to build the image of products and companies, while marketing focuses on product sales concentration within a company.

The primary goal of public relations is to influence individuals and groups to establish mutually beneficial relationships for the success of a company. Furthermore, public relations plays a crucial role in maintaining relationships between clients, the public, and communities amidst various challenges, such as communication errors that threaten a company's image. Public relations is also advised to educate consumers to think rationally in unexpected situations. Moreover, public relations should be capable of resolving current issues and preparing for future risks (Jauhari, 2021).

Public relations, or PR, is divided into two categories: internal public relations and external public relations. Internal public relations aims to create a safe, comfortable, and enjoyable environment as a form of accountability to employees within a company. On the other hand, external public relations aims to foster good relationships and establish a positive company image with external parties (Natawilaga, 2018).

In addition to discussing the objectives of public relations, there are several terms used to refer to public relations in various organizations, such as (Puspa, 2014):

1. Corporate Communication This term is typically used in large corporations. Corporate communication entails responsibility for all communication activities within the organization,

both internal and external. Furthermore, this term can differentiate between the roles of public relations and marketing.

2. **Public Affairs** This term is used within government organizations. Public affairs functions to follow up on service programs to the public, disseminating information about public services or conducting campaigns to support government programs.
3. **Marketing Communication/Marketing Public Relations** The scope of this work pertains more to the role of public relations working within marketing. This is not present in all companies but only in some that require this field. The work done is not merely typical public relations work but focuses on conducting public relations activities within the marketing field.

Characteristics of Public Relations

Public relations also has several characteristics, including (Rochmaniah, et al., 2021):

- a. **Two-way communication and feedback.** Two-way communication and feedback facilitate mutual understanding between the public and the company, reducing the time needed to gauge public and company reactions to information. Providing media platforms for the public is one of the public relations strategies implemented to enable the public to effectively utilize media as a means of sharing desired information.
- b. **Target audience is the public.** The public refers to individuals with interests aligned with those of a company. Internal and external publics can be categorized into internal stakeholders such as managers, employees, shareholders, and employee families. External publics include consumers, government entities, potential investors, media, suppliers, company competitors, distributors, and creditors.
- c. **Establishment of harmonious relationships.** Establishing harmonious relationships between public relations and the public or community within a company positively impacts the company's image. Ultimately, the public feels confident in the company's performance, accepts various regulations within the company, and fosters mutually beneficial cooperation between both parties.
- d. **PR objectives are aligned with the sponsoring company** In this regard, public relations has objectives that have been designed or planned in such a way by the sponsoring company. Therefore, the company's vision, mission, and habits should serve as a guide for public relations in achieving its goals.
- e. **Planned** Public relations in carrying out its duties must have approved planning. The manner in which public relations works continuously involves various employees (Romalina, 2014).

The method used in this research is a qualitative method. Qualitative research emphasizes analysis and description, focusing on in-depth observation of phenomena. In this method, the researcher acts as an instrument in the collection and interpretation of data, making the research results more subjective and prone to bias (Fadli, 2021). This method is often referred to as naturalistic research because it is conducted in a natural setting. The qualitative approach was chosen by the author based on the consideration that this research is conducted in a natural state.

Functions of Public Relations

According to Drs. Onong Uchajana Effendy in his book, there are four functions of public relations (Effendy, 2009):

1. **Service to the public and providing satisfaction to company leaders for the fulfillment of company interests.**
2. **Utilizing two-way communication to facilitate the dissemination of information to clients, the public, and stakeholders involved with the company, as well as conveying public opinions to the organization or company.**
3. **Creating harmonious relationships among companies and organizations with clients, the public, and both internal and external communities.**

4. Serving as a support in management activities until the organization's goals are achieved.

Other functions of public relations include constructive and corrective functions. The constructive function aims to build a positive company image for clients, the public, and stakeholders. Meanwhile, the corrective function aims to restore or rebuild the company's positive image that may have faded due to errors or conflicts between the company and the public (Maryadi, 2020).

Furthermore, it can be concluded that there are two primary functions of public relations (Rochmaniah, et al., 2021): a. Public relations functions to disseminate information. In this role, public relations plays a crucial role as an informant who provides information to the public, communities, and clients collaborating with the company. Public relations disseminates all pertinent information to ensure public awareness. b. Public relations functions to gather information. In this capacity, public relations seeks information on matters deemed essential to know. Public relations must endeavor to gather all information relevant to public opinion about the company. Additionally, public relations can provide input to company management to make informed decisions before information is released to the public.

Harold Lasswell's Communication Theory

Harold Lasswell developed his communication model in 1948. Lasswell's model essentially discusses the components of communication: Who (the communicator), Says What (the message), In Which Channel (the medium used), To Whom (the audience), With What Effect (the outcome). These components help analyze and understand the communication process comprehensively (Mulyana, 2023).

Lasswell's communication model is widely used across various communication aspects for its simplicity and ease of understanding. By applying Lasswell's communication model, effective and efficient communication can be achieved (Kurniawan, 2018). In the communication process itself, the importance of conveying a message between two parties and mutual understanding facilitates the achievement of the goals of applying Lasswell's model (Mardiana et al., 2017).

Lasswell's communication model is relevant to social relations, as it serves as a means to convey messages or information, whether written or unwritten. Effective communication relationships can develop in supportive environmental conditions, fostering better communication relationships over time (Permana & Lewerissa, 2022).

Understanding public relations within PT Carano Integrasi Teknologi (CIT) aligns well with Lasswell's communication theory. This theory can be utilized to disseminate information through various communication channels from communicators to recipients, achieving messages that are comprehensible to clients, the public, or communities. While PT CIT currently utilizes a website as an information source, enhancing the quality of content on the website with diverse articles, news, and relevant information can foster interaction between the company and the public. Ensuring the availability of engaging content can enhance client trust in PT CIT.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research method used in this study is the qualitative method. The qualitative method refers to the natural condition of the object, with results emphasizing meaning rather than generalization (Sugiyono, 2013). Additionally, this study employs structured interview research. The interviews are conducted formally with pre-prepared questions and proceed by discussing the research issues at hand (Sahir, 2021).

In this study, the interview was conducted with Mr. Rusrian Yuzaf, the director and person knowledgeable about the workings of public relations and its crucial role in his company, PT Carano Integrasi Teknologi (CIT) Padang. This research also utilizes the library research method to support the data and information presented. The library research method helps facilitate the search for

information and the utilization of existing library resources to present relevant data in a study (Zed, 2014).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

PT Carano Integrasi Teknologi (CIT), established in 2018, originated from the supply needs that were only available in Jakarta, prompting the company to start its operations in West Sumatra after several employees decided to resign from the Jakarta-based company. One of the company's ongoing missions is to recruit local talent, aiming to become a reliable ICT company specifically from West Sumatra.

PT Carano Integrasi Teknologi frequently collaborates with other companies to manage infrastructure. This collaboration fosters good relationships between clients or companies, ensuring trust in PT CIT as a reliable partner. The open communication strategy helps build clients' trust in working with PT CIT.

In an interview, Mr. Rusrian Yusral stated, *"Our strategy involves maintaining open communication with potential partners. We also have several SOPs, especially in the production field, where rich K3 operational procedures must be met. These procedures are linked to continuously improving service quality, communication with customers, enhancing service standards, and improving ethical SOPs, among others"* (interview on 2/6/2023).

Specifically for fiber optic project needs, PT CIT is still waiting for a supply of labor from Jakarta. Most employees working at PT CIT are graduates of SMK TKJ (Technical Computer Networking). These employees have undergone a series of assessments, from their educational curriculum to the required technical skills, ensuring they meet the company's standards.

PT Carano Integrasi Teknologi is not yet well-known in the job market in West Sumatra, but the company strives to maintain good communication with all parties to uphold its image. Public relations (PR) are considered the "front face" of the company, as the company's image depends on how PR communicates with clients.

"PR acts as the company's front face. Regardless of the company, PR plays a crucial role because if PR makes a mistake in conveying a message, the company's image will depend on what PR conveys" (interview on 2/6/2023).

PR in a company must always strive to present a good image of the company. It is essential for clients to see that PT CIT is a trustworthy partner for collaboration with the public and the broader community. Social media practices are not yet fully functional at Carano; at PT CIT, social media is limited to showing the presence of PT Carano Integrasi Teknologi in Padang. The focus is more on technical work, so there is no dedicated social media management. The business-to-business (B2B) nature of the company makes social media less effective.

Mr. Rian explained that social media serves as a support for PT CIT's presence, *"...Our focus is on Business to Business (B2B). The challenge in B2B is that social media is not effective for promoting our business. B2B is not effective on social media; it's just for presence, to show that we are on social media to secure the account"* (interview on 2/6/2023).

The numerous business partners of PT Carano Integrasi Teknologi demonstrate that clients, the public, or collaborators are comfortable and satisfied with the work of this private company. The work strategy to enhance effectiveness and efficiency involves improving communication with customers and potential clients. PT CIT's PR also collaborates with several vocational schools (SMK) and polytechnics in West Sumatra that offer TKJ (Technical Computer Networking) or similar programs. The collaboration aims to enhance the company's image. The partnership includes the company participating in developing the TKJ curriculum, particularly in fiber optic education.

The achievements within PT CIT align with the functions stated by Drs. Onong Uchajana Effendy, proving that his assertions are valid. The company has achieved satisfaction, two-way communication, harmonious relationships with partners, and supported organizational goals, as evidenced within PT Carano Integrasi Teknologi, Padang.

Two-way communication between PT CIT and clients creates harmonious relationships, such as with SMK and higher education institutions collaborating with the company. Reviewing the target audience, namely the public, and the company's vision and mission are the primary goals to be realized, reflecting PT CIT's achievement in PR characteristics. Additionally, PT CIT continuously seeks information on potential institutions for collaboration.

According to Lasswell's communication theory, this represents a simple communication model between clients and PR or other company parties. The Lasswell Communication Model, essentially a simple communication model, meets the elements of communication within it. PT Carano Integrasi Teknologi's B2B collaboration closely ties to direct communication. Although social media has not been utilized to introduce the company, PT CIT remains steadfast in its efforts. A website providing information serves as an accessible channel for the public. Despite not having a dedicated PR structure, anyone within the company can serve as PR, maintaining a positive company image, wholeheartedly supporting collaboration, fostering harmonious relationships, and showcasing the company's quality.

Simple communication patterns between PT CIT's PR or all employees impact the comfort, trust, and satisfaction of partners or collaborators. PT CIT functions constructively by striving to build a positive image with partners, clients, and the public. This is evident in PT CIT's development, which involves B2B collaboration and ongoing partnerships with SMK and higher education institutions with TKJ curricula.

CONCLUSION

The image guaranteed to be obtained by a company depends on each individual employee within that company. Public relations (PR) serves as the primary perspective for companies that will become partners or collaborators. Building trust among clients is a key task for PR professionals. Thus, it can be concluded that the PR of PT CIT employs a method of open, two-way communication with a simple pattern. Additionally, the strict implementation of standard operating procedures (SOP) aids in the smooth execution of tasks.

Achieving goals and functions proves that the work of PR is not as simple as it might seem. This role must skillfully foster collaboration and maintain good communication to ensure the company's image is always viewed positively. A drawback of this article is that it does not directly source information from someone working specifically in PR. However, broadly speaking, the article has helped introduce the work of PR within the scope of a private company, such as PT Carano Integrasi Teknologi.

Realizing the characteristics or types of PR can also make the company better known and viewed positively by the public. It can increase client satisfaction and maintain good relationships with the company. The company's involvement in developing the TKJ curriculum at vocational schools (SMK) and higher education institutions is evidence that PT CIT can collaborate effectively with clients.

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