

Public relations marketing strategy in building a brand awareness bulk store vert terre in 2023

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Abstract

One company that concerns about waste management in its business operations is Vert Terre. Vert Terre runs a store with the concept of ecofriendly bulk goods, organizing environmental awareness activities and other campaigns with young people. For six years running, Vert Terre experienced an engagement decrease on its Instagram account in 2023, hence, Vert Terre's brand awareness still has not reached a strong level. In building brand awareness, Vert Terre used a marketing public relations (M-PR) strategy. This research aims to explain the marketing public relations strategy in building Vert Terre's brand awareness by using descriptive method with qualitative approach. Using three ways strategy which consists of pull strategy, push strategy, and pass strategy, with seven tools, namely publicity, social activities, media identity, events, sponsorship, news and presentations. The data were obtained through interviews and documentation. The result shows that the strategies implemented by Vert Terre are pull strategy, push strategy and pass strategy. The strategy is implemented by using tactics such as publicity, events, news, presentations, media identity and social activities. This implementation has not had a significant impact on increasing brand awareness in the public eyes as well as Vert Terre's profit in 2023, one of the reasons is that the management of some of Vert Terre's social media is still not optimal.

Keywords

Marketing public relations, Brand awareness, Three ways strategy, Ecofriendly

Introductions

Vert Terre is an eco-friendly concept store founded in 2018 by two young people from Yogyakarta, Tiffany and Ratri Sekar. The establishment of this store was triggered by the founders' awareness of environmental issues. Tiffany and Ratri Sekar began their journey from a small step by offering stainless straws in college because they wanted to encourage their friends to be more aware of preserving the environment. Vert Terre provides various types of household needs such as drinks, toiletries, shopping bags, and cleaning fluids with an eco-friendly concept. Vert Terre's mission is to invite and encourage young people to recognize & start an eco-friendly lifestyle in a fun way.

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In addition, environmental problems are a problem that occurs in almost every region, including the Special Region of Yogyakarta, Indonesia. This is partly due to the community's ignorance in managing and reducing domestic waste production. In 2023, the total waste in Yogyakarta reached 69,157.1 kg. It is undeniable that the increase in the amount of waste is certainly not only the responsibility of several parties, but is the full responsibility of each individual. This is certainly real evidence that there are still many people who are less aware of being environmentally friendly and is a big challenge for Vert Terre in increasing brand awareness (Figure 1).

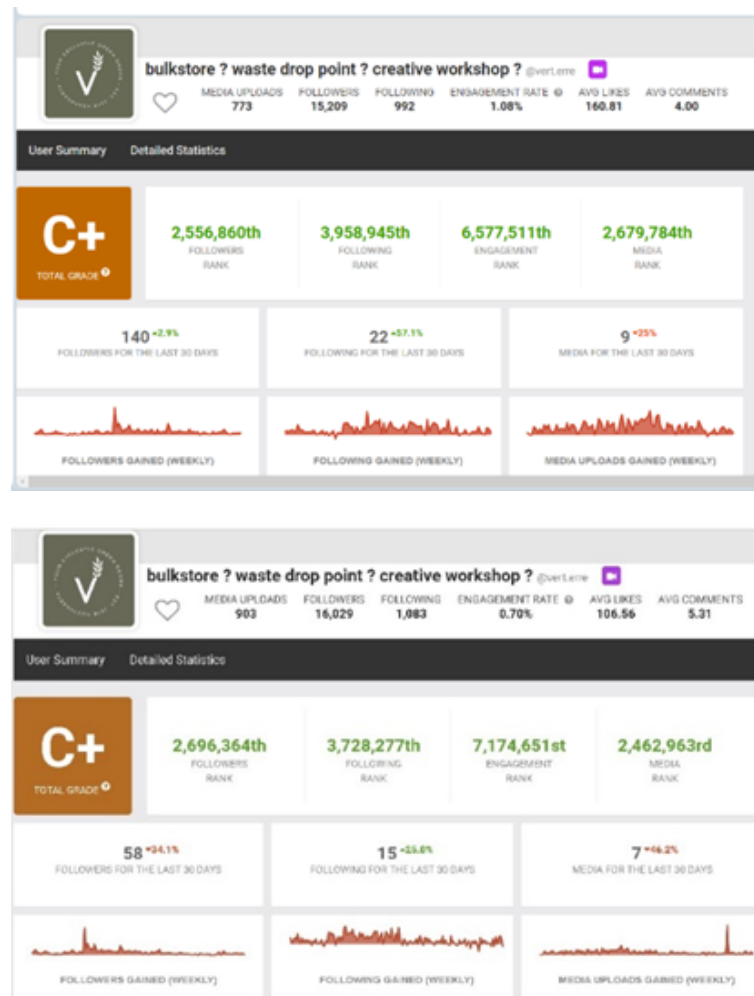


Figure 1. Vert Terre's Data Engagement

Source: <https://socialblade.com/instagram/user/vert.erre>

For six years running, it is certainly not an easy thing to build strong brand awareness until now. Vert.erre experienced a decrease in Instagram engagement in 2023 compared to the previous year. This shows a decrease in the growth of brand awareness from the public towards Vert.erre. Ratri, the founder of Vert Terre, confirmed this decline by stating that there is a 14.7% decrease in turnover in 2023 compared to 2022. The confirmation was revealed in an interview on Tuesday, October 22, 2024 at the Vert Terre Store located on Jalan Kaliurang, 17A KM, Sardonoarjo, Yogyakarta. The problem regarding the brand awareness that Vert Terre faces can use the Marketing Public Relations strategy approach proposed by Kotler in (Ruslan, 2016), which includes Pull,

Push and Pass. As well as the use of seven Marketing Public Relations tools based on the theory proposed by Kotler and Keller in (Sari, 2017), namely Publicity, Events, Sponsorship, News, Presentations, Social Activities and Media Identity. Marketing PR can help increase brand awareness, build a positive image and expand marketing reach (Amstrong, 2018).

Method

The method used in this study is a descriptive method and data collection is carried out through in-depth interviews with informants. The informants in this study are the Founder as the party who made the Vert Terre marketing plan, Vert Terre customers as the party who felt Vert Terre's marketing and Vert Terre Instagram followers as the party who saw and felt the marketing carried out by Vert Terre through Instagram along with documentation in the form of Vert Terre's document collection when carrying out social events, data showing Vert Terre's turnover and engagement on Instagram, and other supporting data which are then summarized and sorted out the information to become a conclusion. This study uses a qualitative approach, and data analysis techniques are carried out through data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions or verification. This study also uses the source triangulation method, which involves testing data from various sources of informants.

Result and Discussion

The results and discussion will be explained based on the results of the interviews that have been conducted with the sources. The result shows that Vert Terre uses several marketing public relations approaches or strategies in building a good brand awareness among its customers, especially the youths. The use of the marketing public relations approach presented refers to the three ways strategy, which will be explained further below.

Push Strategy

1. Publicity

Vert Terre often interacts with its customers interactively through social media. Interaction through publicity. Interaction through publicity is done in the form of Instagram Story and Feeds posts, as well as TikTok and YouTube videos. The interaction through social media is also utilized by Vert Terre to educate more people, especially the young generation as the majority of social media users. Through interviews that have been conducted with Ratri, the founder of Vert Terre, it is found that Vert Terre chose to utilise publicity through social media to increase its brand awareness. This utilisation is in line with the concept of M-PR, where communication can be done through social media. M-PR includes a planning process that aims to increase customer satisfaction through communication. The publicity done by Vert Terre mostly uses the social media platform, Instagram. It was chosen because Instagram itself is one of the social media

that is widely used by all ages, specifically the youths. Vert Terre often uploads contents through feeds or stories containing activities carried out by Vert Terre, introducing their products with interactive posts that are packaged more interestingly both in terms of appearance and content to invite people to minimize the use of plastic waste. This was done to build relationships between Vert Terre and its customers, as well as increase interaction and interest in Vert Terre. However, Vert Terre still needs to improve content management and posting strategies. This is important to do so that it can help companies achieve their business goals, such as increasing sales, customer loyalty and brand awareness.

2. Events

In 2023, Vert Terre conducted many activities such as workshops, campaigns and seminars. The workshops conducted by Vert Terre usually collaborate with similar external parties engaged in environmental empowerment, such as the embroidery workshop which also focus on upcycling fashion items was conducted with Uwustudio at the Vert Terre store. By conducting the workshop at the store, Vert Terre also indirectly introduces the store and Vert Terre's products, which is in accordance with the opinion of (Umaimah Wahid, 2017). The workshop is open to the public, where everyone can participate in the event. In this way, more and more new people are becoming aware of and becoming aware of the Vert Terre brand. At the event, Vert Terre had the opportunity to be the organizer of the event to manage unused clothes so that they do not end up becoming environmental pollution. The workshop or seminar event is one of Ratri and Tiffany's favorite activities as the founders of Vert Terre, because this kind of event has a significant impact on Vert Terre's brand awareness. Vert Terre gets new followers on its social media and new customers who are interested in visiting Vert Terre stores. Moreover, the participants who get new insights on environmental management are one of the specific goals for Vert Terre by conducting the event. Therefore, this is in line with the concept of M-PR, where Vert Terre has communicated directly with its customers. Vert Terre has also introduced itself to the workshop participants at the event.

3. News

Vert Terre also has a news page that often posts Vert Terre's activities or informative articles about the environment. Through an open blogging platform, Medium, under the name Green Cult. One of Vert Terre's posts entitled "Yang Terjadi Kalau Kamu Hidup Less Waste" (What happens when you live Less Waste) contains information related to the positive benefits felt when you start living less wastefully. Articles like this are one of the approaches Vert Terre chooses to reach brand awareness for people who prefer the written or textual form in knowing Vert Terre. News can be used as a promotional media while building the image of an object or agency (Aat Ruchiat Nugraha, 2020). This is in line with the concept of Marketing Public Relations in attracting readers' attention to Vert Terre. However, content management on this news article platform has not been

running optimally, thus, the content uploaded on the article platform by Vert Terre has not been consistent.

4. Presentation

Apart from interacting through social media, Vert Terre often communicates directly with the public consumers. This direct interaction is utilized by Vert Terre to provide education related to the environment and offer explanations regarding the natural ingredients they use in the products they sell. From these interactions, Vert Terre understands what its customers need and want. In addition, Tiffany mentioned that the words of mouth technique is an effective strategy to implement for long term because most customers who come directly to the Vert Terre store already have an awareness of the environment. To maximize this WOM (Words of Mouth) technique, Vert Terre explained by positioning itself as a discussion partner and not patronizing its consumers. Papasolomou and Melanthiou (2012) argue that the impact of WOM itself is even stronger than online promotion. The presentation made by Vert Terre is in accordance with the concept of Marketing Public Relations, through communication and education that is carried out can have an impact on public awareness and be influenced to become Vert Terre customers.

Pull Strategy

1. Publicity

Vert Terre uses Instagram to advertise products, sharing information related to Vert Terre's activities and environmental information content. Publicity efforts are made in the form of feed posts and video reels containing products, documentation of activities, educational content and other creative content. Vert Terre uploads content regularly but there is no fixed schedule and special strategy such as a content plan or script to upload each content.



Figure 2. Vert Terre Instagram View

Source: <https://www.instagram.com/vert.erre/>

According to Farah, an Instagram follower of Vert Terre (Figure 2), the posts are highly informative regarding eco-friendly education, information on for sale products and Vert Terre activities. The appearance is also attractive, in accordance with the tastes of youth today. Farah also said that the upload of detailed product content caught her interest in making a purchase. Vert Terre's publicity is in line with the objectives of the pull strategy as an effort to attract attention to increase brand awareness. From the appearance of the content, Vert Terre has done a remarkable job because it suits the tastes of the youth and keeps up with existing trends, as well as the use of basic language so that the audience and customers can feel closer to Vert Terre. Vert Terre often uses other interactive features such as Question and Answer, CutOuts feature that gives users the opportunity to add to their Instagram stories. The use of these features has more potential to influence customers' demeanor and improve the perception of a brand inside the minds of customers (Marmat, 2021).

2. Media Identity

Vert Terre built a media identity as a movement to be easily recognized by the public. Vert Terre's identity is in the form of logo and business card with the colour pallet in green, white, yellow and brown. The logo identity and colour palette can differentiate Vert Terre from other brands with similar products in increasing brand awareness (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Vert Terre Logo

Source: Tiffani Rizki Putri Baihaqi

As informed by Tiffany as the owner of Vert Terre, the name Vert Terre comes from French words which means green earth. As the name implies, Vert Terre wants to spread the eco-friendly lifestyle to the youth by wrapping it into something contemporary. Tiffany said that the V symbol and the growing leaves symbolize the name of Vert Terre itself and the growing leaves which are interpreted as continuing to grow. Logos take a significant role in building brand awareness. According to (Hadiprawiro, 2018), the use of symbols such as logos and mascots are supporting factors in increasing brand awareness. Brand awareness can also increase consumer purchase interest because it can form a positive perception of a brand (Elizabeth A. Minton, 2024). Vert Terre's media identity is different from other brands and strong enough to become the top of mind awareness of the public. Like the opinion of Kris who

stated that Vert Terre's colour palette is very inherent and easily recognizable so that the content is easily distinguished from other brands.

Pass Strategy

1. Social Activities

The formation of Vert Terre began with a concern about the persistent waste problem in Yogyakarta. Starting with introducing the use of stainless straws when Ratri and Tiffany were in college, they introduced their friends to the importance of protecting the environment through the use of eco-friendly straws. It turned out to have a big impact, more and more of their friends began to be interested and learned to reduce the use of plastic. It was this ignorance factor that Vert Terre began to respond to. Collaborating in a waste drop point system with Daur Resik to help the community in sorting waste, working with Lindungi Hutan in a tree planting program through donations collected from Vert Terre sales, and working with several other parties in workshop activities to educate related to environmentally friendly. The results of the data obtained also show that customers are happy with the various approaches taken by Vert Terre. As a customer, Kris feels that Vert Terre listens to what the customer needs and wants. Vert Terre also takes a creative and acceptable approach in inviting and educating many youths to better understand environmental friendliness through various social activities that Vert Terre organizes. The activities carried out certainly also have a good impact on several parties, both the community and environment. In addition to attending and organizing events, Vert Terre seeks to carry out social activities that have a positive impact on the environment, which build a good public opinion and increase brand awareness. As a result, this study proposes three way strategy as presented in Figure 4.



Figure 4. Conclusion of this study

Conclusion

Vert Terre in the three-way strategy theory uses a pull, push and pass strategy which contains four of the seven stages of PR marketing. Each strategy has been implemented in accordance with the PR Marketing concept, but the implementation of these tactics has not had a significant impact on increasing Vert Terre's brand awareness and turnover in 2023. In the future, it is recommended that Vert Terre can maximize this strategy by implementing other PR Marketing tactics and finding more effective techniques to increase Vert Terre's brand awareness and turnover. More effective techniques such as creating a content planner and monthly report for Vert Terre's social media posts within the next one to two months to increase user engagement and measure Vert Terre's social media reach. As well as implementing paid advertising for content to significantly increase visibility, based on advertising performance data on relevant social platforms. Vert Terre can also make better plans for their news pages to be more active and attractive so that they can reach wider public awareness, both through the media and social activities that Vert Terre has carried out.

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