Public Relations Strategy in Creating School Branding Through Social Media

Putri Dea Novita[1], Amilda[2,] Nyimas Atika[3]

[1,2,3]Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Fatah, Palembang, Sumatera Selatan, Indonesia
dnputri94@gmail.com[1], amilda_tarbiyah_uin@radenfatah.ac.id[2],
nyimasatika@radenfatah.ac.id[3]

Abstract. *This study discusses the process of public relations strategy to create school branding through social media at SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang. Through a qualitative approach with interview, observation and documentation techniques. In carrying out the school branding strategy, public relations carries out two strategies used in creating school branding through social media using two applications, namely Instagram and Tiktok. The strategies carried out in these two applications are in the form of publication of school activities through social media and activities to build interactions with followers on social media. Publication of activities posted on social media accounts, namely by publicizing various school events, extracurricular activities and student achievements and public relations activities in building interactions with followers on social media accounts by actively participating in replying to followers' comments on social media accounts so that it is hoped that this can establish school closeness with followers on social media in an effort to create school branding. With this strategy, it is expected that the quality, school activities and various school achievements can be known and recognized by the entire community.*

Keywords: *branding, public relations, social media, strategy*

Abstrak. Studi ini membahas mengenai proses strategi humas untuk menciptakan *branding* sekolah melalui media sosial di SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang. Melalui pendekatan kualitatif dengan tekhnik wawancara, observasi dan dokumentasi. Dalam melakukan strategi *branding* sekolah humas melakukan dua strategi yang digunakan dalam menciptakan *branding* sekolah melalui media sosial dengan menggunakan dua aplikasi yaitu Instagram dan juga Tiktok. Strategi yang dilakukan di kedua aplikasi ini berupa publikasi kegiatan sekolah melalui media sosial dan kegiatan membangun interaksi bersama pengikut di media sosial. Publikasi kegiatan yang diposting di akun media sosial yaitu dengan mempublikasikan berbagai acara sekolah, kegiatan ekstrakurikuler dan prestasi siswa serta kegiatan humas dalam membangun interaksi bersama pengikut (*followers*) di akun media sosial dengan melakukan partisipasi aktif dalam membalas komentar pengikut (*followers*) di akun media sosial sehingga diharapkan hal ini dapat menjalin kedekatan sekolah bersama pengikut di media sosial dalam upaya menciptakan *branding* sekolah. Dengan adanya strategi ini diharapkan kualitas, kegiatan sekolah dan berbagai prestasi sekolah yang ada dapat diketahui dan dikenal oleh seluruh masyarakat.

Kata Kunci: *branding, humas, media sosial, strategi*

INTRODUCTION

The growing population of the community encourages educational institutions to have a lot of development. Such as the increasing number of existing private schools, the rapid sophistication of technology, and the changing times that are growing. One of the efforts of educational institutions is to use social media. No wonder, if social media is often used because

through social media everyone can access and obtain any information, even the unlimited reach of social media. With this advancement, educational institutions can use social media to show their quality and value to the public through social media(Ramadina & Taufik, 2021). Therefore, this encourages schools and public relations practitioners to create a school branding strategy by utilizing social media channels optimally.

Strategy is an art that is carried out in carrying out the planning that has been formed. With several plans that have been prepared and are gradual (gradual improvement) by judging from the ability or not of an institution to achieve a goal that has been set pre-determined(Suryono, 2020). Strategy is a managerial process that is used as a tool in achieving the success of goals by maintaining a plan of various opportunities that exist to be utilized in accordance with the goals that an institution wants to achieve(Marissa, 2022).

With a strategy, a goal of an educational institution will be well formed through its role in the educational institution, namely as a tool in decision-making, coordination and communication and as a target that is considered to be able to adjust to the goals of the educational institution(Budio, 2019). Pearce and Robinson also assessed that strategies are useful for educational institutions in anticipating opportunities and threats that will occur in the future, as a guide and goal of the organization and as a tool that can monitor the organization in doing a good job of solving problems(Budio, 2019).

Public Relations is a social relationship with the community in establishing a good relationship between organizations and the public which will certainly affect the success or failure of an organization(Broom G.M, 1994). With the existence of public relations which is one of the functions in management which in its activities supports coaching, maintenance and also communication involving management in responding to problems and finding solutions in public relations(Ruslan, 2020)

Public Relations is also one of the activities in which it is required to have mutual understanding and integration of people's attitudes and actions towards an institution, from this, of course, public relations must be able to become a team that must understand and provide sufficient understanding of an institution to be able to change a community's perspective on the institution(Morrisan, 2010). Public Relations is a management function that contains activities in communicating with the public. In its activities, public relations is responsible for preparing the best strategy in establishing communication to introduce an educational institution to the community

(Anwar, 2024). Public Relations also plays a very important role in creating school branding by becoming a direct liaison between educational institutions and the community, such as by implementing communication with the community(Anwar, 2024). Two important scopes in public relations are internal and external relations, both internal and external relationships are important in fostering good relationships between parties from within the organization and parties from outside the organization in order to create positive relationships with the community(Jeffkins, 2004).

Branding is often interpreted as a process in creating a strong positive perception of an institution so that the positive impression can be attached to the minds of the community, of course this usually requires an effort, creativity and also the latest innovations when applying branding to the community(Jamaluddin, 2020).

Branding is an activity in which it aims to introduce the product or institution owned so that it is expected to increase the value of an institution so that it is more widely known by the public(Prasetyo, Nufian S. Febriani, 2020). Branding can be a communication process carried out by an institution in an educational institution, branding can be an identity that refers to the characteristics of an educational institution(Wardani, 2021).

In the activity of creating school branding to the community, of course, public relations is an important party to create a good strategy in terms of creating school branding through social media(Manurung, 2023). Branding for an educational institution is not only introducing the school to the community but also with this the school is required to have excellence and quality displayed. With social media, the excellence and quality of the school can be shown properly so that the public can directly see the various developments of the educational institution(Hanifah & Istikomah, 2022) .

With branding, it can increase the level of parental trust in the school. This is proven if parents view that a school that has displayed quality and has various achievements is a school that has good quality and makes the school its own attraction(Prasetyo, Nufian S. Febriani, 2020). From this, branding can be said to be an activity that aims to introduce a brand or educational institution to the public by showing the quality and excellence possessed by the institution.

Social media has become one of the things that is popular both among young people and in this day and age. Social media that has various sophisticated features makes this social media an important need for humans, especially in various information and news to the public (Kotler, 2014)

Media sosial menjadi platform digital yang memiliki berbagai kegunaan untuk bersosialisai baik melakukan komunikasi baik bentuk foto maupun video Social media is a digital platform that has various uses for socializing, both in the form of photos and videos (Arum Wahyuni Purbohastuti, 2017). Social media has also covered various necessary needs and has even become an important tool in interacting with each other online(Hasna & Irwansyah, 2019).

Social media has various functions, namely as a personal identity arrangement of social media account users (identity), arrangements of social media account users in communicating (conversations), exchange of information in the form of text, images and videos (sharing), freedom of access from one user to another (presence), relationships between social media account users (relationship), community formation in social media accounts (groups)(Fatat, 2022).

Social media branding is used as a digital platform that has developed and is the alternative chosen in creating school branding. In this case, SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang uses two social media applications that are used in creating school branding, namely through the Instagram application and the Tiktok application.

Instagram is one of the social media that has grown rapidly today, in addition to having many enthusiasts, Instagram is also famous for the many features that can be used in it, namely various information, both photos and videos, communicating through chat, audio and even video calls, moreover, there is also a live broadcast feature(Cry Cinta P. Anjeli, Betris L. Lengkong, 2022).

In creating school branding, public relations use Instagram and Tiktok social media to introduce educational institutions to the public by showing the quality, activities implemented and various school achievements. To publicize this, an educational institution needs social media such as Instagram, of course it has been widely known that Instagram is a popular and popular thing among both young people and adults with an application in which it can be used for various information, both photos and videos with the creation of interesting and informative content in creating branding through Instagram social media (Zein, 2024) . Tiktok is also one of the social media that is often used to promote a business, introduce a product, institution, even to increase sales through content as well as to share information and also communicate(Billa & Sanin, 2023). With this, schools can optimize branding strategies through social media, namely Instagram and Tiktok.

The researcher sees that schools are seen to have been active in managing social media by displaying publications from various school activities, both daily activities, school events, extracurricular activities and student achievements that have been achieved and by actively interacting with followers who are expected to establish school closeness with followers on social media accounts, namely Instagram and Tiktok.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research began from July to November 2024 at SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang which is located on Jalan Serasi II, KM 13 Sukarami District, Sukodadi Village, Palembang City, South Sumatra. The vocational school is located within the scope of the Foundation with Accreditation A. The research method used is qualitative research using a qualitative descriptive approach. Qualitative research allows for a holistic understanding of observed phenomena, by utilizing a variety of natural methods. A qualitative descriptive approach is used to research the current status, conditions, or thinking related to public relations strategies in creating school branding through social media. The type of data used is qualitative data obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation, as well as primary and secondary data sources. The research informants include the Deputy Public Relations and Student Affairs Representatives at the vocational school. Data collection techniques include observation, structured interviews, and documentation. The data was then analyzed through data reduction, data presentation, data verification, and conclusion drawn. The validity test of the data was carried out through source triangulation and technique triangulation, with the hope that the results of the research on public relations strategies in creating school branding through social media at SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang can be stated correctly and validly. This method was obtained to produce data for analysis obtained from the results of interviews, observations and documentation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the public relations strategy to create school branding through social media by carrying out two activities, namely publishing school activities through social media and interaction activities through social media which are the two strategies used in creating school branding at SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang, according to the book(Mujib, Tutik Saptiningsih, 2020). It was stated that social media is a tool used to create school branding from various online and offline activities in which it is necessary to have a compatibility

between the activities carried out and the activities posted on social media in an effort to introduce and create school branding in the eyes of the public.

Based on interviews in the field, the researcher analyzed that the publication of school activities through social media at SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang was carried out through two social media applications, namely the Instagram application and the Tiktok application. This social media account is activated as a place to post or publish school activities such as student activities in P5 (Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project), school events with sponsors, extracurricular activities, and by publishing various student achievements. This is intended so that the school can build school branding so that the school can be known by the wider community.

Based on the observations found by researchers in the field, the researcher observed that the management of social media at SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang has been actively managed, judging from the school's social media accounts that actively post all school activities, with a large number of followers and the number of posts and likes of followers on posts displayed on the school's social media accounts. In observation, it is also seen that the publication of school activities on social media is in the form of student activities in P5, extracurricular activities such as Scouts, PMR, Student Council, and also Futsal as well as by publishing student achievements such as championships from student competitions.

The documentation that the researcher found on the social media account of SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang. The following is the look of Instagram and Tiktok social media accounts:
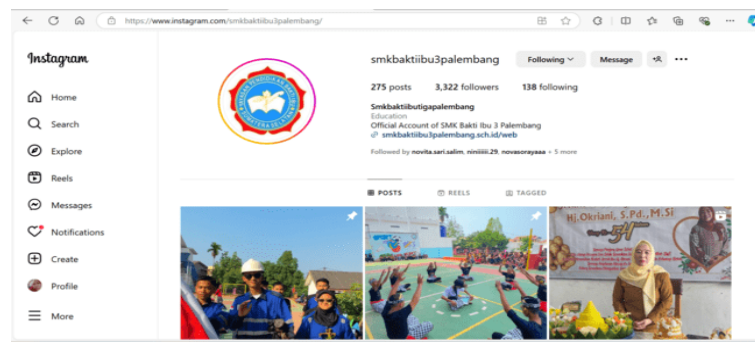

Figure 1. Instagram Account Page of SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang

Figure 1 shows the Instagram account page of SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang which can be seen to have 3,322 followers which proves that the Instagram account of SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang already has many followers on the Instagram social media account and it is also seen from the school's

active activity in posting school activities so that the number of posts on the Instagram social media account has reached 275 posts.
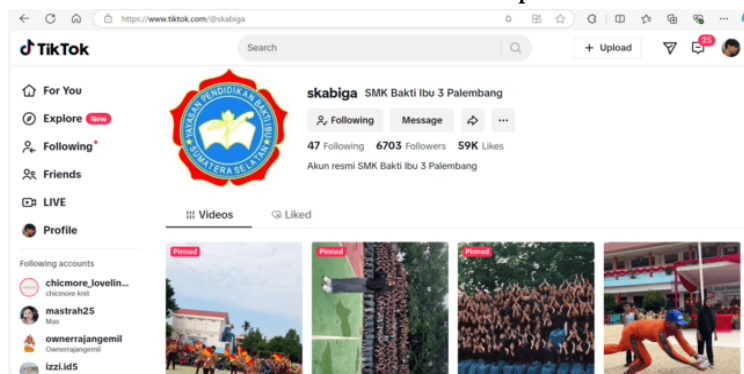

Figure 2. SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang Tiktok Account Page

Figure 2 shows the Tiktok account page of SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang which looks like it has a total of 6703 followers. And has 59K number of likes in the post which shows that the Tiktok social media account of SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang has many followers and also the number of post likes that has reached thousands of likes from followers.

Then, the activities published by the school based on the results of observation, the researcher observed that the activities published by the school on the Instagram social media account were in the form of student activities such as P5 activities (Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project), school events, extracurricular activities, pencak silat championship achievements and also futsal which the researcher included in the documentation, namely:
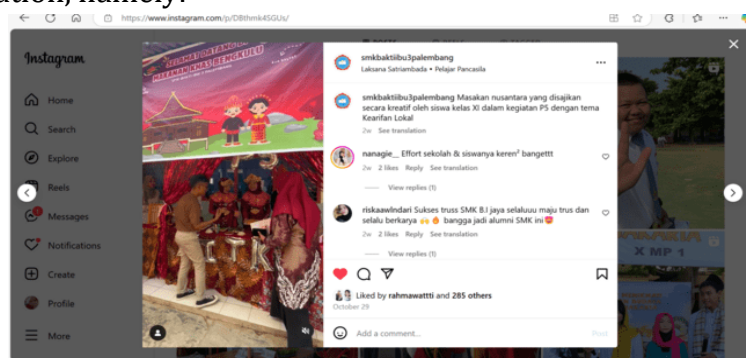

Figure 3. School Event Activities (P5)

Figure 3 shows the appearance of the Instagram social media account that publishes the student's P5 activities under the theme of Nusantara Cuisine (Local Wisdom) which has been presented by grade XI students. It can be seen on the display of the social media account that the ongoing P5

activity is in the form of a video that can be accessed through the Instagram social media account of SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang.

Figure 4. extracurricular activities

Figure 4 shows the display of the school's Instagram social media account which shows extracurricular activities, namely PMR which contains the inauguration of the new PMR management. The same thing also applies to other extracurricular activities such as student council and Scouts. In terms of school extracurricular activities, it can also be seen that extracurricular activities at SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang are quite active, judging from the old management which will be replaced with new management with the implementation of the management replacement ceremony in the field of SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang.

Figure 5. Student Achievements of the Pencak Silat Championship

Figure 5 shows the display of the Instagram social media account in the publication of school activities by showing the championship of student achievement in the non-academic field, namely the pencak silat competition championship by getting three silver medals and two bronze medals in the 2023 South Sumatra Forprov event. It can be seen that the student achievement activities at SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang in the non-academic field have been quite good from the achievements of students who have won many awards and medals, which of course this can be an effective strategy

for schools to create school branding through the publication of activities for outstanding students.

Figure 6. Futsal Championship Student Achievements

Figure 6 shows the display of the Instagram social media account in the publication of school activities by showing the championship of student achievement in the non-academic field, namely the futsal competition championship in the Palembang Futsal Cup Tournament in the category of high school/vocational high school students at the Palembang city level. Judging from the display of social media, in the extracurricular field, students of SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang are active in participating in competitions and also receive awards for the competitions that are participated in as seen in the picture, namely by participating in competitions from the Palembang city level. Furthermore, the researcher documented one of the school publication activities in the Tiktok application:
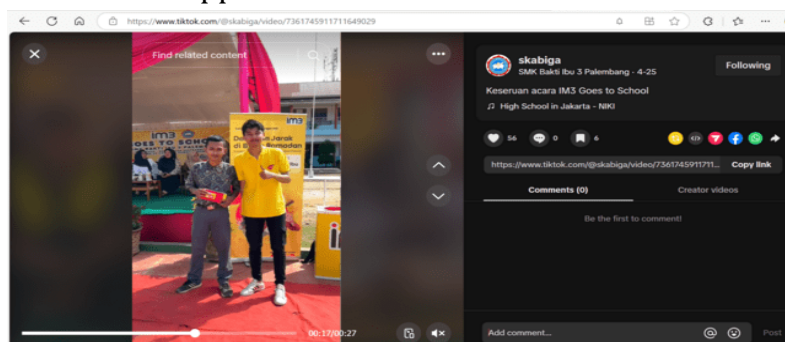

Figure 7. Events in Tiktok Social Media Accounts

Figure 7 shows the display of Tiktok social media accounts that publish school event activities in collaboration with IM3 in a workshop event with the theme "IM3 Goes to School". It can be seen that in the video of the event, the school is seen collaborating with the IM3 card by inviting students to participate in Workshop activities, Game Ranking 1, and exciting performances from Stand Up Comedy Palembang with the addition of extracurricular dance performances. From this, it shows the form of school event publication activities involving sponsors, namely from IM3.

Thus, based on the results of observations, interviews and documentation above, the researcher can conclude that the publication of school activities through social media at SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang is carried out in many ways, namely by publicizing student activities such as P5 activities, school events in collaboration with sponsors, the appearance of extracurricular activities also by conducting a handover ceremony for the management of the organization, and also publishing the achievements that have been achieved by students of course, these various activities are one of the public relations strategies in its activities to create school branding through social media at SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang.

The same thing was also found in another researcher's research in the Journal of Educational Management at SMA Muhammadiyah 4 Bandung City which used the use of social media as a means of promotion in improving school branding through social media Instagram and also the use of websites by conducting optimal management. In the management of social media, it can be seen in the results of the study that the school does the same thing as the researcher's research, namely by publishing school activities through the website and also Instagram, the school documents every school activity such as student activities of congregational dhuha prayers, tahfidz activities, distribution of student report cards and also academic and non-academic achievements which are documented into Instagram social media accounts and also websites (Siti Aisyah et al., 2024).

The same thing is also supported in his book Fathul Mujib which discusses activities in building quality relationships and interactions with the community through online activities such as by publishing the activities of an educational institution which are shown through social media so that the public can know various activities carried out by an educational institution online through social media (Mujib, Tutik Saptiningsih, 2020)

Interaction activities through social media are aimed at public relations and followers by requiring an approach and also establishing communication with followers through social media. Based on the results of the interview above, the researcher analyzed that school interaction activities through social media include public relations activities in responding to comments, replying to messages, questions, answering complaints, suggestions and support given by followers to the school. In addition, it turns out that school social media is also a tool used by the surrounding community to give complaints to the school when they see student delinquency outside of school such as student activities involved in

brawls. Social media is an alternative used by the public in providing complaints, usually in the form of DM (direct message) private messages.

The researcher provided documentation related to the interaction carried out by the public relations to followers on Instagram social media accounts, which are as follows:

Figure 8. View Comments on Instagram Posts

Figure 8 shows the display of comments on the Instagram social media account in one of the school posts in a series of P5 activities (Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project) with the theme of Diversity Singularity. Judging from the appearance of the comments, there has been a positive response to the comments with one of the comments captured in the documentation, namely comments that aim to provide enthusiasm in working, success and always shine for students of SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang. The comments received were 54 Comments and the number of Likes was 574.
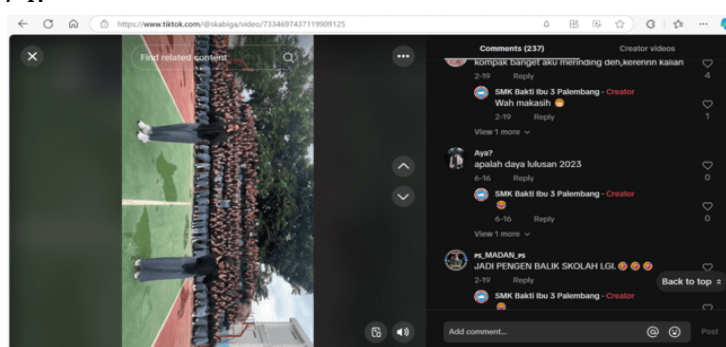

Figure 9. Follower Comments Display on Tiktok Posts

Figure 9 shows the display of followers' comments on Tiktok posts in the activity of making a farewell video from grade XII students. It can be seen in the view of the video showing a video recorded as a farewell memory which was given a hashtag in accordance with the title of the song used, namely "my grandmother my hero" by Wali. Judging from the overall

comments, the researcher observed that the content of the comments praised the cohesiveness of the video making. The comments received were 242 comments with a number of likes of 27.5 thousand.

Researchers have also made observations by observing the course of comments in several posts, it can be seen that in the comments posted on the school's social media accounts, almost no one comments negatively about the school and almost the average commenter is an alumnus of SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang because it seems that they praise the school and often comment if there have been many changes compared to previous years. And it can also be seen from the number of likes and comments from both social media accounts, namely Instagram and Tiktok accounts, it is observed that Tiktok accounts have the highest number of likes and comments compared to Instagram accounts. From this, the researcher can conclude that when viewed from the progress of social media of SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang, which is seen from the number of positive comments and also post likes, indicates that the SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang Tiktok account is a branding tool that is good enough to be applied in carrying out public relations strategies in creating school branding through social media.

Thus, the researcher can conclude based on the results of interviews, observations and also documentation that the researcher has obtained in the field that the public relations strategy at SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang in creating school branding has been carried out quite well. This can be seen from the management of social media that is active in publicizing various activities carried out at school such as school events, competitions, extracurricular activities and even publishing student achievements on social media and also the school, especially the public relations team, has tried to build interaction between the school and followers on social media by actively replying to comments, responding to questions, even being responsive and friendly in responding to followers' responses on social media in an effort to create school branding through social media at SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang. The same thing is also supported in the Al-Tabyin journal entitled Public Relations Management Strategy in Creating School Branding, in this study it supports something similar to the researcher's research, namely one of the public relations strategies applied through effective communication by managing an informative and interactive website and being active on social media, this can build public trust in schools, especially to attract interest for prospective students and parents. (Atsillah et al., 2022)

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the research conducted by the researcher at SMK Bakti Ibu 3 Palembang in public relations activities to create school branding through social media has been running well, it can be seen from the public relations has carried out two strategies, namely by publishing school activities through social media and interacting with followers through social media. The publication of this school activity is by publicizing all forms of school activities such as school events, competitions, extracurricular activities and also student achievements and by carrying out activities that involve interaction with followers by communicating such as by actively replying to comments, responding to messages and also replying to questions from followers in every post on school social media. These two activities are carried out through two social media accounts, namely Instagram and Tiktok. These two accounts are the place for publication of school activities and interaction activities .

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anwar, M. (2024). *Manajemen Humas Di Lembaga Pendidikan*. Kencana.

Arum Wahyuni Purbohastuti. (2017). Efektivitas Media Sosial Sebagai Media Promosi. *Ekonomika*, *12*(2), 212–231.

Atsillah, N., Husna, M., & Halik, A. (2022). Strategi Manajemen Humas dalam Menciptakan School Branding : Studi Kasus MAN 1 Parepare. *Al-Tabyin*, *3*(2).

Billa, S., & Sanin, F. (2023). Penerapan Digital Marketing Dalam Media Sosial Tiktok PT Otak Kanan Untuk Membangun Brand Awarness Application of Digital Marketing in PT Otak Kanan ' s Tiktok Social Media to Build Brand Awarness. *Faedah : Jurnal Hasil Kegiatan Pengabdian Masyarakat Indonesia*, *1*(3).

Broom G.M, C. S. M. C. A. H. dan. (1994). *Effective Public Relations*. Prentice Hall.

Budio, S. (2019). Strategi Manajemen Sekolah. *Journal Menatq*, *2*(2).

Cry Cinta P. Anjeli, Betris L. Lengkong, dkk. (2022). Branding Institusi Pendidikan Melalui Media Sosial Instagram. *SEIKO: Journal of Management & Business*, *5*(2), 44. https://doi.org/10.37531/sejaman.v5i2.2893

Fatat, M. N. (2022). *Strategi Branding Berbasis Media Sosial Instagram Di UIN Walisongo Semarang*. UIN Walisongo Semarang.

Hanifah, N., & Istikomah, I. (2022). Branding sekolah swasta dalam menghadapi kebijakan zonasi. *JURNAL IDAARAH*, *VI*(2), 274–286.

Hasna, S., & Irwansyah, I. (2019). Electronic Word of Mouth Sebagai Strategi Public Relation Di Era Digital. *Interaksi: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*, *8*(1), 18. https://doi.org/10.14710/interaksi.8.1.18-27

Jamaluddin, M. B. (2020). Strategi Branding di Sekolah Dasar Islam Plus Masyitoh (Yayasan Miftahul Huda) Kroya Cilacap. *IAIN Purwokerto*.

Jeffkins, F. (2004). *Public Relations Edisi Kelima*. Erlangga.

Kotler, P. & G. A. (2014). *Principle Of Marketing, 15th edition.* Pearson Prentice Hall.

Manurung, J. (2023). Strategi Pemanfaatan Media Sosial Sebagai Sarana Promosi Sekolah Musik Di Dotodo Music Edutainment. *Technomedia Journal (TMJ)*, *8*(2), 248–260.

Marissa. (2022). *Strategi Pemasaran (Konsep, Teori dan Implementasi)*. Pascal Books.

Morrisan. (2010). *Periklanan: Komunikasi Pemasaran Terpadu, Edisi Pertama*. Prenada Media Grup.

Mujib, Tutik Saptiningsih, F. (2020). *School Branding: Strategi di Era Disruptif*. PT Bumi Aksara.

Prasetyo, Nufian S. Febriani, B. D. (2020). *Strategi Branding (Teori dan Perspektif Komunikasi dalam Bisnis)*. UB Press.

Ramadina, P. S., & Taufik, B. K. (2021). Strategi Marketing Pendidikan Melalui Media Sosial di Sekolah. *PeTeKa (Jurnal Penelitian Tindakan Kelas Dan Pengembangan Pembelajaran)*, *4*(1).

Ruslan, R. (2020). *Manajemen Public Relations & Media Komunikasi (Konsepsi dan Aplikasi)*. PT Raja Grafindo Persada.

Siti Aisyah, Hidayati, D., Budi Santosa, A., & Widodo, H. (2024). Manajemen Pemanfaatan Website dan Instagram Sebagai Sarana Promosi untuk Meningkatkan Branding Sekolah. *Manajemen Pendidikan*, *19*(1), 16–36. https://doi.org/10.23917/jmp.v19i1.4023

Suryono, A. (2020). *Teori & Strategi Perubahan Sosial*. PT Bumi Aksara.

Wardani, E. K. (2021). Strategi Kepala Sekolah dalam Menciptakan School Branding di SMP Islam Al-Azhar 29 BSB Semarang. In *Skripsi Universitas Islam Negeri Walisongo Semarang*.

Zein, N. (2024). Branding Perusahaan PLN UP3 Sidoarjo Melalui Media Sosial. *Economic and Business Management International Journal*, *6*(1), 1–5.