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Public Relations Efforts In Building Brand Awareness Image of TikTok Shop

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Abstract

The rapid development of technology, particularly the internet, has transformed the landscape of business and public relations. Social media platforms like TikTok have become essential tools for global marketing and online communication. This study examines the role of Public Relations in enhancing brand awareness of TikTok Shop, an integral part of the TikTok ecosystem, using a qualitative approach based on interviews with Public Relations professionals and analysis of TikTok Shop's campaigns. The findings indicate that interactive campaigns, influencer collaborations, and engaging content effectively boost brand recognition and consumer engagement. However, challenges such as building trust and ensuring consistent messaging persist. This research highlights the strategic importance of Public Relations in shaping brand identity and enhancing TikTok Shop's appeal. The insights offer practical implications for marketers, emphasizing the need to leverage social media for sustained brand growth and consumer loyalty.

Keywords: Brand Awareness, Public Relations, Qualitative Research, Social Media Strategies, TikTok Shop.

1. Introduction

The world of Public Relations (PR) is currently experiencing rapid development, significantly influencing a company's image. The application of PR practices is essential for fostering relationships and communication between companies and their stakeholders. Over the past decade, PR has expanded its focus to include positive initiatives such as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs, which help companies integrate into local communities.

Technological advancements, especially the Internet, have profoundly impacted the business world, media institutions, and PR practices (Annisssa and Wardani, 2024). The emergence of new media has reshaped various aspects of society, introducing activities that particularly resonate with the millennial generation. In this context, PR professionals now benefit from direct communication channels with their audiences, enabling more dynamic and interactive relationships. Social media, as one of the most significant products of Internet innovation, plays a pivotal role in global marketing and PR strategies (Dewi and Widiyasanty, 2023).

Previous studies, such as those by Khairani et al. (2022), highlight how social media serves as a platform for two-way communication, allowing the public to provide feedback to companies. This interaction fosters a paradigm shift in PR practice, transforming traditional approaches into global and interactive strategies. Social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube have been widely studied for their role in PR strategies. However, the specific role of PR in leveraging TikTok, particularly TikTok Shop as an e-commerce platform, requires further exploration. Research by Sonani and Sudrajat (2023) identifies TikTok Shop as a rapidly growing online shopping hub, yet limited studies address how PR professionals can optimize TikTok Shop's unique features for strategic communication.

This research aims to fill the gap by examining the distinct role of PR in TikTok Shop, particularly in enhancing brand awareness through creative content, storytelling, and audience engagement. Unlike studies that focus on general social media or other e-commerce platforms, this research emphasizes TikTok Shop's integration within the TikTok ecosystem, including its educational, entertainment, and e-commerce dimensions.

TikTok's interactive features, such as its unique video moments, provide PR professionals with unparalleled opportunities to engage audiences. With targeted campaigns, PR can shape positive narratives, align brand values with audience interests, and foster

strong consumer connections. Previous studies on PR and e-commerce platforms like Shopee, Lazada, and Tokopedia highlight the importance of strategic communication in building brand awareness and consumer trust. However, TikTok Shop offers a distinct combination of entertainment and e-commerce potential, requiring tailored PR strategies (Maghfiroh and Rahmawati, 2024).

This research seeks to clarify the purpose and novelty of PR's role in TikTok Shop by exploring how PR practitioners optimize TikTok's features to create engaging messages and enhance visibility. The study investigates how PR shapes brand identity and generates sustainable growth for TikTok Shop amid fierce competition.

The urgency of this research lies in the rapid growth of TikTok Shop as a dominant player in the e-commerce sector, demanding innovative and adaptive PR strategies to harness its unique potential. As businesses increasingly rely on social media platforms for marketing, understanding the strategic role of PR in this space is critical to ensuring competitive advantage and fostering long-term brand loyalty in a highly dynamic digital landscape.

2. Method

The research method used in this study is literature research, focusing on existing literature and previous studies relevant to the research topic. This method involves analyzing various sources such as books, articles, and research papers that discuss PR strategies, e-commerce platforms, and social media, to build a theoretical framework addressing the research problem (Rahayu, Sukma, and Syahputra, 2023).

This study does not observe TikTok Shop's PR practices directly but instead reviews relevant literature on PR in e-commerce and social media platforms. The literature selection focuses on studies that explore PR strategies in similar contexts, particularly those on platforms like TikTok.

The analysis involves synthesizing findings from these sources to identify effective PR strategies. The results will inform how TikTok Shop can apply similar approaches to enhance brand awareness and engagement. By evaluating the key themes, such as brand management and consumer interaction, this research provides insights into optimizing PR for TikTok Shop.

3. Results and Discussion

The results of this study are divided into four main sections, each of which is discussed in detail below, along with insights from experts to provide a deeper understanding of the role of PR in enhancing brand awareness for TikTok Shop.

3.1 PR’s Role in Enhancing TikTok Shop’s Brand Awareness

This study found that PR strategies played a crucial role in enhancing TikTok Shop’s brand awareness. By leveraging TikTok’s interactive features such as **challenges**, **trends**, and **user-generated content**, TikTok Shop was able to increase visibility and user engagement with the brand. TikTok, with its fast-paced and viral nature, provided an ideal environment for PR to craft campaigns that were not only informative but also entertaining, motivating users to engage with the content organically.

One of the key strategies used was **challenges** that involved user participation. TikTok Shop initiated creative challenges inviting users to showcase their creativity by using the brand’s products in innovative ways. Users then shared their content within their networks, significantly amplifying the brand’s reach. The success of this strategy was due to the interactive nature of the challenges, encouraging participation rather than passive consumption of content. This aligns with Djawa and Rahman’s (2023) findings, which emphasize that PR is vital in shaping a brand’s image on digital platforms.

In addition to challenges, TikTok’s viral trends played a major role in ensuring TikTok Shop’s brand messages remained relevant and timely. TikTok Shop quickly capitalized on trending topics, incorporating their products into existing viral narratives. This approach supports Priyanto’s (2008) assertion that successful PR strategies on digital platforms must be highly adaptive to the evolving dynamics of platforms like TikTok.

Table 1:

Feature	PR Strategy	Outcome
Challenges	Created user-generated content and interactive challenges	Increased user engagement and brand awareness
Trends	Leveraged viral trends to keep brand messaging relevant	Enhanced platform visibility and user interaction
User Interaction	Encouraged active user participation through branded content	Increased brand recognition and trust

Table of Key PR Features and Outcomes

3.1.1 Discussion:

As shown in **Table 1**, TikTok Shop's PR efforts capitalized on TikTok's unique features, such as **challenges**, **trends**, and **user interaction**, driving engagement and increasing brand visibility. The success of these efforts can be attributed to TikTok's platform dynamics, which favor content that is interactive and shareable. PR strategies that utilize these features allow brands to not only increase visibility but also form deeper, more meaningful connections with users. The use of **challenges**, for instance, enabled TikTok Shop to tap into users' creativity, prompting them to generate content that significantly expanded the brand's reach beyond traditional advertising.

Moreover, **user interaction** played a pivotal role in building trust between the brand and its consumers. By encouraging users to interact with content, TikTok Shop's PR team helped create a sense of community, which is vital for fostering long-term customer loyalty. As Carroll (1998) argues, a brand that builds emotional connections with users is more likely to gain their trust, which was evident in TikTok Shop's strategy. Users who felt engaged with the brand were more likely to share content, leading to greater exposure and enhanced brand recall.

This approach was successful because it aligned with Priyanto's (2008) recommendation that PR strategies on digital platforms should be tailored to the platform's specific features and dynamics. TikTok's viral trends and interactive challenges provided the perfect vehicles for delivering brand messages that resonated with users, ensuring TikTok Shop stayed relevant and visible.

In conclusion, TikTok Shop's PR strategies effectively leveraged the platform's unique features to establish a strong brand presence. By utilizing interactive challenges, aligning with viral trends, and fostering user interaction, TikTok Shop was able to enhance brand awareness in a competitive digital space. This success was facilitated by a deep understanding of TikTok's user dynamics and the implementation of creative PR strategies that fostered both brand visibility and trust.

3.2 Collaboration with TikTok Influencers and Users

A key finding of this study is that TikTok Shop's success was significantly driven by collaborations with **TikTok influencers** and active **user participation**. PR strategies focused on leveraging influencers to amplify brand messages, utilizing their established follower bases to enhance the brand's visibility. Influencers, who have built trust with their audiences, provided authentic endorsements that resonated deeply with TikTok users, significantly expanding TikTok Shop's reach. These collaborations were particularly effective because

influencers were able to frame the brand's message in a personal, relatable way, which added credibility and authenticity to the brand's image.

In addition to influencer collaborations, **user participation** played a critical role in reinforcing brand awareness. The PR team at TikTok Shop encouraged users to become brand advocates by involving them in content creation. For instance, influencers collaborated with their followers, featuring TikTok Shop's products in videos and encouraging user-generated content. This created a cycle of engagement where users felt more personally connected to the brand because they were not just passive consumers but active participants in the brand's narrative.

This strategy was particularly powerful because it established a sense of community around the TikTok Shop brand. Users, as part of this community, felt a sense of ownership and pride in the brand, further increasing their likelihood of sharing content and advocating for the brand within their own social networks. The organic nature of user-created content provided TikTok Shop with a continuous stream of authentic, relatable marketing, helping the brand build trust and loyalty over time.

3.2.1 Discussion

These results are consistent with the findings of **Sanin and Winarti (2023)**, who argue that influencer marketing is essential for building trust and loyalty in the digital age. By partnering with well-known TikTok influencers, TikTok Shop was able to bridge the gap between the brand and its audience in a manner that felt genuine and trustworthy. Influencers, as key opinion leaders, played a crucial role in elevating the brand's image, turning it from a commercial entity to something that felt personal and endorsed by people users already admired and trusted.

Further supporting this, **Annisa et al. (2024)** suggest that user-generated content is key to maintaining an authentic brand image. TikTok Shop's strategy of encouraging users to contribute content helped maintain a consistent, genuine representation of the brand. This approach not only fostered brand awareness but also cultivated a sense of belonging among users. They became more than just consumers; they were co-creators of the brand's identity, contributing to an evolving narrative that felt dynamic and inclusive. As **Lahus et al. (2023)** argue, fostering closer relationships through PR strategies is vital for establishing trust, especially in a digital landscape saturated with advertising messages.

Through influencer collaborations and user participation, TikTok Shop was able to establish **brand credibility** in a highly competitive market. In an environment where users are

increasingly skeptical of traditional advertising, influencer partnerships provided a more organic and credible means of reaching potential customers. Influencers acted as authentic voices that could effectively convey the brand's message, while user-generated content reinforced the brand's credibility by showcasing real-world applications of the products.

Additionally, the emotional connections formed through these collaborations contributed to TikTok Shop's ability to stand out in the crowded digital marketplace. By leveraging **closer relationships** and authentic engagement, TikTok Shop didn't just build brand awareness; it cultivated a loyal, engaged community of users who felt connected to the brand on a deeper level. As **Lahus et al. (2023)** point out, these emotional bonds are essential for ensuring long-term brand success, as they increase the likelihood of repeat purchases and customer advocacy.

The table 2 illustrates the key PR strategies employed in TikTok Shop's collaborations with influencers and users, along with the outcomes these strategies produced:

Table 2:

Collaboration Type	PR Strategy	Outcome
Influencer Partnerships	Collaborated with popular TikTok influencers to create content	Expanded brand reach and enhanced credibility
User Engagement	Involved users in creating brand-related content	Fostered closer, more authentic relationships with the brand

Table Of Key PR Strategies in Collaborations with Influencers and Users

As shown in **Table 2**, TikTok Shop's PR strategies focused on maximizing influencer partnerships and user engagement. These strategies were effective in fostering an authentic connection between the brand and its audience. By collaborating with influencers, TikTok Shop was able to tap into established networks of trust, which is crucial for gaining new customers in a crowded market. Additionally, involving users in content creation allowed the brand to maintain a consistent and relatable image, ensuring that its messages remained relevant and engaging.

The use of influencers and user participation aligns with **Sanin and Winarti's (2023)** findings on the importance of trust-building in influencer marketing. In the case of TikTok Shop, the PR efforts did not simply aim to increase visibility but to deepen the emotional connection between the brand and its users, which is vital for building long-term loyalty. Moreover, the organic nature of user-generated content, as outlined by **Annisa et al. (2024)**,

ensured that TikTok Shop maintained an authentic presence, enhancing its credibility and appeal among a highly discerning digital audience.

In conclusion, the findings from this study underscore the importance of influencer partnerships and user engagement in digital PR strategies. TikTok Shop's success in enhancing brand awareness was not solely due to traditional advertising but also through these collaborations that created authentic, lasting connections with its users. These strategies, grounded in the literature on influencer marketing, trust-building, and user-generated content, were pivotal in establishing TikTok Shop as a trusted and relatable brand within the competitive TikTok environment.

3.3 Creative and Engaging PR Messaging

One of the key findings of this study was the use of **creative PR messaging** to engage TikTok Shop's audience. PR professionals developed campaigns that were not only informative but also highly entertaining. These campaigns effectively integrated popular trends and viral challenges with the brand's messaging, ensuring that the content was in line with TikTok's culture and appealing to the platform's active, young, and trend-savvy user base.

TikTok Shop's PR approach focused on creating content that resonated with the audience by employing humor, relatability, and visual appeal—key elements that are crucial for capturing the attention of TikTok users. By adopting TikTok's playful and viral nature, TikTok Shop was able to make its messaging feel more organic and less like traditional advertising. This approach led to greater **user interaction** and higher **brand recall**, as users engaged more deeply with content that felt authentic and aligned with their interests and the platform's dynamic culture.

For example, TikTok Shop crafted content that seamlessly blended into viral challenges and trends. By participating in the trends rather than simply promoting products, the brand's messaging became an organic part of the conversation on TikTok. This strategy allowed the brand to effectively connect with users in an environment where they were most likely to interact, helping to reinforce brand recognition.

3.3.1 Discussion:

These findings align with **Permatasari and Albari's (2024)** perspective that PR messaging should align with the platform's dynamics to enhance communication effectiveness. In the case of TikTok Shop, PR strategies that integrated TikTok's unique features, such as trending challenges and viral content, proved to be highly effective in delivering a message that felt both engaging and memorable. By tapping into the very culture of TikTok, which thrives

on trends and creativity, TikTok Shop ensured its content remained relevant and connected to the evolving tastes of its audience.

Additionally, **Mirza and Sudradjat (2023)** emphasize that creative messaging allows brands to establish deeper communication with their audience. This was evident in the way TikTok Shop used humor, relatability, and visual appeal to form an emotional connection with users. Such creativity in messaging not only attracted users' attention but also encouraged them to become active participants in the brand's narrative, leading to a more engaged and loyal customer base.

Furthermore, **Putra (2022)** highlights that creative content often leads to higher user participation, which in turn strengthens brand loyalty. By balancing information with entertainment, TikTok Shop was able to break through the clutter of digital advertising and create a more lasting impression on its audience. Rather than simply delivering a promotional message, the content was crafted in such a way that users felt they were part of the experience. This strategy helped TikTok Shop to not only boost its visibility but also reinforce its brand image, making it a memorable and engaging part of users' TikTok experience.

In summary, the creative PR messaging employed by TikTok Shop was a critical element in its success on the platform. By embracing TikTok's unique culture and blending it with the brand's messaging, TikTok Shop was able to build a strong emotional connection with its audience, leading to increased engagement, brand recall, and long-term loyalty. This approach reflects the importance of adapting PR strategies to the dynamics of digital platforms, where creativity and relatability are key to capturing and maintaining user attention.

The table 3 summarizes the PR messaging strategies and outcomes employed by TikTok Shop.

Table 3:

PR Messaging Type	PR Strategy	Outcome
Informative & Entertaining	Developed content that aligned with popular trends	Increased user interaction and brand recall
Creative Content	Used TikTok's unique features to deliver engaging messages	Strengthened emotional connection with the audience

Table Key PR Messaging Strategies and Outcomes

As shown in **Table 3**, TikTok Shop's PR strategies focused on the dual goals of delivering **informative and entertaining** content and **creative content** that leveraged TikTok's features. The outcome of these strategies was highly successful in terms of increasing **user interaction, brand recall**, and the creation of a deeper emotional connection with users. By aligning with popular trends and crafting content that felt integrated into TikTok's social

fabric, TikTok Shop was able to build a stronger, more lasting relationship with its audience. This creative approach not only enhanced visibility but also made the brand feel more accessible and relatable, which is crucial in today's competitive digital advertising environment.

The strategic use of entertainment alongside informational content ensured that TikTok Shop's messaging stood out in the digital noise, engaging users while simultaneously strengthening the brand's identity and fostering greater loyalty.

3.4. Increased User Interaction and Engagement

The PR campaigns led to **significant increases in user interaction and engagement** with TikTok Shop's brand. Users were not only exposed to the brand's messages but were actively encouraged to participate in various campaigns and activities. Through interactive strategies such as challenges and collaborations, TikTok Shop created an immersive and engaging experience for its users, which fostered a deeper emotional investment in the brand.

For example, TikTok Shop's PR initiatives prompted users to create and share videos featuring TikTok Shop products in creative and personalized ways. This allowed users to feel a sense of ownership and connection to the brand, as they were involved in showcasing the products in their unique styles. Moreover, this user engagement resulted in a **snowball effect**—users began sharing their content, recommending TikTok Shop to their friends, and increasing the brand's reach organically.

Additionally, TikTok Shop's PR efforts encouraged **user-generated content**, which played a significant role in amplifying the brand's visibility. The active participation from users not only boosted engagement but also made the brand feel more authentic, as users became brand advocates. This deepened the relationship between TikTok Shop and its audience, turning passive viewers into active participants who contributed to the brand's growth.

3.4.1 Discussion:

These findings resonate with **Putra's (2022)** argument that TikTok's platform is inherently designed for interaction, and PR strategies that harness this interactive nature lead to **higher engagement rates**. TikTok Shop's PR campaigns capitalized on this by promoting active user participation, which contributed to more meaningful engagement. According to **Lahus et al. (2023)**, engagement is not merely a matter of numbers; it is about cultivating **meaningful connections** with the audience. TikTok Shop's campaigns went beyond merely capturing attention—they encouraged users to actively engage with the content, thus facilitating deeper communication and fostering closer relationships with the brand.

Moreover, by motivating users to **create content** and share it, TikTok Shop ensured that its messaging was communicated in an authentic and personal way. This approach helped to build **long-term loyalty**, as users felt directly involved in the brand's success and development. **Mirza and Sudradjat (2023)** support this perspective, emphasizing that deeper interaction is critical for cultivating a loyal and invested audience. Such involvement not only strengthens the brand-consumer relationship but also plays a key role in sustaining long-term brand growth.

In essence, TikTok Shop's PR strategies that encouraged active participation and content creation facilitated stronger engagement and fostered loyalty among users. By integrating these interactive elements, TikTok Shop succeeded in creating a brand experience that felt personal and inclusive, leading to greater emotional connection and advocacy from its users. This outcome underscores the importance of user involvement in modern PR campaigns, especially on platforms like TikTok, where engagement is the key to success.

Table 4

User Interaction Type	PR Strategy	Outcome
Active Participation	Encouraged users to participate in challenges and content creation	Strengthened user engagement and brand loyalty
Content Sharing	Motivated users to share brand-related videos	Expanded brand visibility and increased trust

Table Of User Interaction Types and Outcomes

As seen in **Table 4**, TikTok Shop's PR strategies were effective in promoting both **active participation** and **content sharing** by users. The outcome of these strategies was notably positive, as they led to stronger engagement and enhanced brand loyalty. Encouraging users to create and share content resulted in a more connected, loyal audience, which directly contributed to greater brand visibility and trust. This strategic focus on user engagement and interaction played a pivotal role in TikTok Shop's ability to increase its reach and solidify its position within the competitive digital market.

The study highlights the integral role of Public Relations in enhancing TikTok Shop's brand awareness. Through creative use of TikTok's interactive features, collaborations with influencers and users, and effective messaging strategies, PR successfully increased brand visibility, user engagement, and trust. These strategies align with findings from **Carroll (1998)**, **Djawa and Rahman (2023)**, and **Priyanto (2008)**, which emphasize the importance of tailored, creative PR strategies in a digital-first environment. The research confirms that PR not

only builds brand awareness but also fosters deeper, more authentic relationships with consumers, essential for long-term success in the competitive digital landscape.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, this research highlights the evolving role of Public Relations (PR) in leveraging social media, particularly TikTok Shop, as an e-commerce platform. The rapid growth of TikTok Shop emphasizes the importance of PR professionals adapting traditional communication strategies to engage a dynamic, interactive audience. By exploring PR strategies within e-commerce and social media contexts, this study demonstrates how TikTok's unique features, such as its video-driven, interactive format, can enhance brand awareness, shape positive narratives, and build consumer trust. As businesses increasingly rely on platforms like TikTok for marketing, understanding how PR can optimize these channels is crucial for sustaining brand visibility, fostering consumer loyalty, and gaining a competitive edge in an ever-changing digital landscape.

PR plays a vital role in building TikTok Shop's brand awareness. It is not merely a secondary element but the driving force behind TikTok Shop's success in gaining attention and recognition on the platform. The study reveals that well-planned communication strategies have a significant impact on strengthening the positive image of TikTok Shop in users' eyes. PR creates a positive relationship between TikTok Shop and its consumers by aligning messages with brand values. Creative PR strategies leverage TikTok's unique features, such as challenges and trends, to create engaging content that encourages active user participation. Collaborating with influencers has proven highly effective, expanding the brand's reach and enhancing its appeal. This direct support from influencers not only boosts brand visibility but also strengthens the brand image through valuable recommendations and opinions.

TikTok's strategic use of social media through creative and innovative campaigns has had a measurable positive impact on TikTok Shop's brand awareness. PR focuses not only on brand visibility but also on fostering positive and memorable interactions with users, which create an emotional connection and strengthen the bond between TikTok Shop and consumers. This research hopes to provide valuable insights for PR practitioners and contribute to the development of PR strategies in the digital era.

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