



Implementation Strategy of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) to Improve Company Image: Case Study on PT. Anugerah Sawit Inti Harapan

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Abstract

The development of the palm oil industry is increasingly rapid, triggering intense competition among companies in this industry. One of the key factors in winning the competition is a good company image. Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) emerged as a holistic strategy to build and improve a company's image. PT. Anugerah Sawit Inti Harapan, as a leading company in this sector, faces the challenge of strengthening their corporate image amidst market dynamics. This research aims to analyze the strategy for implementing Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) in improving the company's image, with a focus on the case study of PT. Anugerah Sawit Inti Harapan. This research uses a literature review method by exploring the latest literature regarding Integrated Marketing Communication and its application in the context of palm oil companies. The main research object is the IMC strategy that has been implemented by PT. Anugerah Sawit Inti Harapan. Case study analysis of PT. Anugerah Sawit Inti Harapan also shows the efforts made by the company to integrate marketing communications. The conclusion of this research is that the strategy of implementing Integrated Marketing Communication can be the key to success in building and improving a company's image, especially in the palm oil industry. The practical implication of this research is the need for companies to adopt a holistic and integrated IMC approach to achieve marketing success and build a positive reputation.

Keywords: Company Image, Integrated Marketing Communication, Marketing Strategy. Palm Oil Industry, PT. Anugerah Sawit Inti Harapan

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Introduction

The rapid development of the palm oil industry and intense competition have created significant dynamics in this sector. The palm oil industry, as one of the crucial agricultural sectors, is experiencing very rapid growth in response to global demand for palm oil. This growth is driven by the diversity of uses of palm oil in various consumer products, from food and beverages to industrial products such as cosmetics and biodiesel fuel. Apart from that, the attractiveness of this industry is also strengthened by the high efficiency of palm oil production as the main source of oil (Shigetomi et al., 2020). However, along with rapid growth, the palm oil industry is also faced with increasingly fierce competition between the companies operating in it. This competition includes aspects of production, distribution, marketing and sustainability (Mekhilef et al., 2011; Teng et al., 2020). Palm oil companies compete to obtain productive land, increase plantation productivity, and optimize supply chains to meet increasing demand. These conditions create immense pressure for companies to not only be efficient in their operations but also to build a good image to differentiate themselves in a crowded market. The importance of corporate image as a key factor in competition cannot be ignored in the modern business context. Corporate image reflects the company's perception and reputation in the eyes of consumers, stakeholders and the general public (Fadillah et al., 2023). In intense competition, company image becomes a critical element that differentiates business success and failure. Consumers tend to choose products or services from companies that have a positive image, because a good image creates trust and loyalty (Maulyan et al., 2022). A positive company image with good industrial employee performance can create company trust in the performance of its employees, thereby fostering consumer loyalty (Irawan, 2023). Employees are an important asset in a company and their relationship with customers is closely related. Therefore, this linkage is the main focus of palm oil companies that want to provide the best service for their customers (Kurdi et al., 2020). The digital era and increasing information transparency means that every company action can be quickly published and accessed by the general public. Therefore, companies must pay great attention to their image, as mistakes or unethical actions can harm a company's reputation in a short time. Good image management involves transparent communication, consistency of company values, and active involvement in social and environmental initiatives.

The growth factors of the palm oil industry and market dynamics create a very dynamic and complex landscape in this sector. The growth of the palm oil industry, which has a direct impact on palm oil production, is triggered by various factors. The continuously increasing global demand for palm oil as the main raw material in various industries, including food, cosmetics and biodiesel, is one of the main drivers of this growth (Muh. Kamim & Abrar, 2020). The high efficiency in palm oil production also makes this industry a strategic resource to meet the world's vegetable oil needs. The market dynamics of the palm oil industry are influenced by various factors, including fluctuations in global vegetable oil prices, changes in government policies related to trade and sustainability, as well as pressure from civil society and environmental organizations regarding sustainable production practices. Fluctuating palm oil prices can affect company revenues and change the dynamics of competition in international markets (Syahril et al., 2019). Government policies related to deforestation, land management

and human rights also play an important role in shaping market dynamics and palm oil industry practices (Yanto et al., 2022). Increasing consumer demand for sustainable and environmentally friendly products is reinforcing the sustainability trend in this industry. Palm oil companies that are able to adapt their production practices to sustainability standards, such as the RSPO (Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil), have an advantage in responding to growing market demands (Sinaga & Hendarto, 2012). This dynamic creates additional pressure for palm oil companies to integrate sustainable practices in their value chains. In this context, palm oil companies need to have the flexibility to adapt to changing market conditions, manage risks associated with price fluctuations and policy changes, and proactively respond to consumer demands regarding sustainability (Von Geibler, 2013). These complex market dynamics create challenges and opportunities for palm oil companies, which must remain responsive to changes around them to maintain their competitive position in this rapidly evolving industry.

PT. Anugerah Sawit Inti Harapan, as a leading company in the palm oil industry, is supported by a strategic position in the palm oil industry, becoming a key player in palm oil production. With involvement in a comprehensive supply chain, the company has a significant role in meeting global demand for palm oil. PT. Anugerah Sawit Inti Harapan is also faced with various challenging factors that can affect their company image. One of the main challenges is related to environmental and sustainability issues which are often in the spotlight in the palm oil industry. Deforestation, waste management and corporate social responsibility are critical aspects that influence public and consumer perceptions of the plantation industry in general (Halkos & Nomikos, 2021). The need to strengthen a company's image is becoming increasingly important considering the pressure and demands from society, government and consumers for sustainable business practices (Cancela et al., 2023). PT. Anugerah Sawit Inti Harapan needs to face and respond to this challenge by making changes and innovations in their operational practices. This includes adopting sustainable farming practices, more effective waste management and active involvement in social initiatives that support local communities around their farms. The implementation of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) has a significant contribution to improving the company's image, forming a positive perception in the eyes of stakeholders and consumers. First, IMC allows companies to integrate their marketing messages consistently through various communication channels (Taryana & Retnowardhani, 2023). By conveying a uniform message through advertising, sales promotions, direct marketing, and various other communication elements, companies create clarity and consistency in communication between employees. The application of this communication technique also allows companies to more effectively reach their target audience (Ab Aziz, 2024). By aligning communications strategies across multiple channels, companies can maximize efficiency and reach a wider audience. This helps in creating a stronger and deeper impression in the minds of consumers, improving the company's image as a cohesive and trustworthy brand. Additionally, IMC plays an important role in building trust and credibility. By focusing on communication coordination and integration, companies can adapt their messages according to changing trends and consumer needs (Ikhsana et al., 2019). This helps companies to remain relevant and responsive in a dynamic business environment. By

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conveying consistent and effective messages, companies can differentiate themselves from competitors and build a positive image in the eyes of consumers.

The rapid dynamics of the palm oil industry and intense competition create a significant landscape in this sector. The palm oil industry, as the backbone of palm oil production, is growing rapidly in response to global demand for palm oil. The importance of corporate image as a key factor in competition cannot be ignored in the modern business context. Corporate image reflects the company's perception and reputation in the eyes of consumers, stakeholders and the general public. The relationship between corporate image and business success becomes essential in an increasingly competitive and transparent business environment (Gallardo-Vázquez et al., 2019). A positive company image creates trust, consumer attraction, investment opportunities, and attractiveness as a good place to work (Julythiawati & Ardiana, 2023). This research brings new contributions to the understanding of the complexities and challenges faced by companies in the palm oil industry, especially in the context of intense competition and sustainability demands. The novelty of the research lies in a holistic approach through the application of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) in building and improving the company's image. Not only does it look at marketing and communication aspects, but this research also highlights the urgency of sustainability and corporate social responsibility in changing market dynamics.

Literature Review

Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) is a comprehensive approach in managing all forms of company marketing communications with the aim of achieving maximum consistency and synergy. The basic concept of IMC involves integrating various elements of marketing communications, such as advertising, sales promotions, public relations, direct marketing, and other elements, so that they can operate simultaneously and create a coordinated message (Faizah & Huda, 2019; Kushwaha et al., 2020). The main principle of IMC is to create unity in communication, where the message conveyed by the company can be received consistently by the target audience through various communication channels (Mujianti, 2022). The application of IMC in a business context involves the process of planning, implementing and measuring the results of all forms of marketing communications carried out by the company. This includes identifying the target audience, developing appropriate messages, selecting effective communication channels, and integrating all these communication elements to achieve established business goals. Implementing IMC requires close coordination between various departments, including marketing, advertising, sales and public relations, so that the messages conveyed can create maximum impact (Permana et al., 2023). The benefits of implementing IMC in increasing communication effectiveness are very significant. First, IMC helps companies avoid confusion and inconsistencies in the messages conveyed to consumers (Kang, 2021). By integrating all communication channels, companies can ensure that the messages conveyed are consistent and can be understood by the target audience. This consistency creates brand clarity and strengthens the company's identity in the eyes of consumers. Second, IMC increases the efficiency of marketing expenditures by avoiding

overlap and ineffective deployment of resources (Porcu et al., 2019). By planning and managing all forms of communication in an integrated manner, companies can optimize the use of their marketing budget and achieve better results. Additionally, IMC allows companies to be more responsive to market changes and consumer trends, because communications can be adjusted quickly and consistently.

Research Method

This research adopts the literature review method to analyze strategies for implementing Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) in improving the company's image, with a focus on the case study of PT. Anugerah Sawit Inti Harapan. A literature review approach was chosen to investigate the current literature on IMC and its application in the context of the palm oil industry. The initial step involves identifying relevant sources through academic databases and related literature. Sources used include journal articles, books, and related industry reports. After identifying key sources, researchers conducted an analysis of the basic concepts of IMC and implementation strategies in the context of palm oil companies. An in-depth understanding of IMC theory is integrated with the findings and strategies that have been implemented by PT. Anugerah Sawit Inti Harapan. Data obtained from literature provides a theoretical basis for evaluating the practices that have been carried out by companies in building and improving their image. In addition, a case study approach is used to describe the concrete implementation of IMC strategies by PT. Anugerah Sawit Inti Harapan. Primary data was obtained through interviews with key company stakeholders, including the marketing team and senior management. In-depth interviews were conducted to gain more detailed insight into the specific steps the company had taken in integrating their marketing communications. Selection of PT. Anugerah Sawit Inti Harapan as a case study was carried out by considering the company's success in the palm oil industry and the challenges they faced in building a positive image. Using a combination of literature review and case study methods, this research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how IMC implementation strategies can play a role in improving a company's image, especially in the context of the palm oil industry.

Result and Discussion

Evaluation and Challenges of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) Strategy by PT. Anugerah Sawit Inti Harapan

The Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) strategy implemented by PT. Anugerah Sawit Inti Harapan has an important role in presenting integrated marketing messages through various communication channels. One of the main benchmarks in this evaluation is the consistency of message delivery through different communication channels, including advertising, direct marketing, sales promotions and public relations. The importance of consistency in conveying this message reflects the views of (Chandra, 2023), who emphasizes that messages delivered uniformly can form a strong and positive perception about the brand. For example, when advertising messages for palm oil products are balanced with parallel direct

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marketing and sales promotion efforts, consumers are likely to gain a deeper understanding of the value and benefits of the product or service being offered. Therefore, consistency in IMC is the foundation for building a brand identity that sticks in the minds of consumers. Research by Ernawati et al., (2021) shows that effective IMC can make a positive contribution to brand image and consumer purchasing decisions. Therefore, companies need to measure the extent to which their brand messages and values are delivered consistently and adequately to the target audience. Measuring the performance of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) strategies at PT. Anugerah Sawit Inti Harapan involves a number of analytical methods that provide deep insight into the effectiveness of integrated communications efforts. Analysis of consumer sentiment, comments and interactions provides a direct picture of how existing human resources respond with loyalty and allows companies to adjust their strategies over time. Even though the Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) strategy promises significant potential benefits in building the image of PT. Anugerah Sawit Inti's strong expectations and increasing consumer engagement, special challenges arise in efforts to measure its performance. One of the main challenges is the measurement complexity resulting from integrating multiple communication channels. As stated by Prikhodko et al., (2019) , separating and identifying the contribution of each channel is difficult, considering the interaction and mutual influence between IMC elements. Therefore, companies need to develop holistic evaluation methods and consider various parameters to gain a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of IMC strategies in the company. Selecting the right method is key to overcoming this challenge, so that companies can gain a comprehensive understanding of the extent to which their integrated marketing messages achieve their communications and marketing goals.

Even though there is potential for success, implementing an IMC strategy is also faced with a number of challenges that can hinder its effectiveness. One of the main challenges is cross-functional and cross-channel coordination. Implementing IMC involves various departments such as marketing, advertising, and public relations working together to create a consistent message. The challenge lies in effective coordination between these departments so that the messages conveyed do not overlap and create a consistent impression. Apart from that, changes in the business environment and technology are also obstacles. The development of digital media, for example, adds complexity to IMC strategies by introducing new communication channels and changing consumer behavior. Companies must continue to adapt to the latest trends and technology to remain relevant and effective in conveying their marketing messages. The importance of overcoming these challenges was recognized by Schultz and Kitchen (2000) who stated that the successful implementation of IMC depends on the company's ability to overcome organizational and technological obstacles. Overall, performance evaluation and a deep understanding of the challenges in implementing an IMC strategy are key to building and maintaining well-integrated marketing campaigns, enhancing brand image, and strengthening relationships with consumers.

IMC's Positive Contribution to the Company Image of PT. Anugerah Sawit Inti Harapan

Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) makes a significant positive contribution to the company's image by integrating various marketing communication elements. PT. Anugerah

Sawit Inti Harapan utilizes the implementation of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) by integrating various marketing communication elements including advertising, direct marketing, promotions and public relations. Implementing an integrated marketing communications strategy is important for delivering coordinated messages to stakeholders, especially in industries that often face loyalty and corporate image challenges. The IMC strategy implemented by PT. Anugerah Sawit Inti Harapan is a strategic tool to overcome this problem. Yasir et al., (2022) stated that companies can develop IMC campaigns that include information about the sustainable practices they apply in palm oil production, environmental protection efforts, and involvement in social activities in local communities. By consistently communicating these messages through a variety of communication channels, including advertising, direct marketing, promotions, and public relations, companies can build a positive narrative around their commitment to social and environmental responsibility. This is in line with research by Kusumajaya & Hibatulloh, (2023) , that coordinated communication can not only help reduce the negative impacts associated with this problem, but can also shape the company's image as a caring and sustainable player. In addition, information coordination through IMC also allows companies to provide comprehensive information to stakeholders, thereby avoiding potential overlap or confusion that could harm reputation. The success of IMC can help PT. Anugerah Sawit Inti Harapan creates a stronger and more positive perception of its brand. By communicating their message in a unified manner, companies can project an image as an entity that is transparent, sustainable, and committed to responsible practices. Therefore, implementing IMC can be a strategic tool for palm oil companies to mitigate issues that are often debated in the industry while strengthening relationships with consumers and other stakeholders.

The importance of consistent messages in building a company's reputation is also recognized by Suryo & Nurma, (2023) who state that IMC encourages the creation of a uniform and integrated channeled communication process. This increases understanding and perception of the company's value in the eyes of consumers. By avoiding ambiguity and confusion in communication, PT. Anugerah Sawit Inti hopes to create a strong, attractive and memorable reputation among consumers. Successful communication messages are consistently delivered through a variety of communication channels, including advertising, direct marketing, sales promotions, and public relations. These aspects create narratives that are integrated and support each other. In this case, IMC helps companies develop a different and positive impression of corporate values, long-term goals and commitment to social responsibility. One of the beneficial aspects of IMC is increasing the company's reputation and trust. By consistently broadcasting messages with company values and integrity, consumers are usually encouraged to feel confident in the company's products. Mishra et al., (2014) constant communication consistency encourages strong bonds of trust between stakeholders, whether consumers, partners, or the general public. This increase in trust can then be very important in developing a company's reputation. According to Das, (2021) , IMC creates the impression of a cohesive and reliable company, with increased trust this can facilitate the development of long-term consumer commitment. By creating a strong, attractive and positive reputation through IMC, PT. Anugerah Sawit Inti hopes to reduce the risk of environmental and social problems that are of concern to consumers and the general public. Therefore, IMC is not only a means of

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advertising a company's products and services, but also a strategic tool that facilitates the perception of trust, increases trust in the company, and creates a solid reputation in the market.

IMC communications strategies help create a consistent and positive narrative about the company, strengthen consumer trust, and naturally improve the company's reputation. Therefore, companies that implement IMC strategies well tend to benefit in building positive relationships with consumers and other stakeholders. Therefore, companies that implement Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) strategies well tend to gain benefits in building positive relationships with consumers and other stakeholders. Through an integrated approach to marketing communications, companies can convey uniform and cohesive messages, create an impression of consistency, and strengthen their brand identity (Danar et al., 2020) . This provides clarity to stakeholders regarding the company's values and objectives and can build strong trust among consumers (Wear et al., 2023) . Consumer trust gained through message consistency and transparent business practices can be valuable capital to strengthen long-term relationships. Research by Chamidah et al., (2020) highlights that trust is a key factor in building a company's reputation, and IMC can be an effective instrument in forming a positive image and increasing sustainable interactions with stakeholders. Thus, companies that understand and implement IMC strategies well can achieve not only a competitive advantage but also a solid foundation for establishing positive and sustainable relationships with consumers and other stakeholders. Overall, IMC's positive contribution to a company's image is seen not only through the consistency of the message conveyed, but also through increased trust and reputation that can help differentiate the company in a competitive market. A deep understanding of the value of IMC as the main driver of this change in perception is the key to the company's success in building a strong and positive image.

Impact and Consideration of IMC Strategy in the Palm Oil Industry in Sustainability

The impact of the Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) strategy on stakeholders, especially in the context of the sustainability-oriented palm oil industry, is a crucial aspect that needs to be considered. Stakeholders, which include consumers, employees, investors and other parties, have an important role in determining a company's success and reputation. This concept is in accordance with the views of Peatrat et al., (2020) , who emphasize that evaluation of IMC success must include the perspectives and expectations of various stakeholder groups. In the sustainable palm oil industry, where environmental and social issues are a major concern, stakeholder responses can provide an insight into the extent to which companies are committed to sustainable practices. According to Asemah & Popoola, (2018) , stakeholders are often the main assessors of IMC success because their perceptions can influence the company's image and level of trust. Effective implementation of IMC in the sustainable palm oil industry can include in-depth communication campaigns about sustainable practices, environmental concerns, as well as the company's positive impact on local communities. Research by (Gómez et al., 2023) highlights the importance of trust as a key element in building a company's reputation, and IMC can be a strategic tool to strengthen stakeholder trust by conveying consistent messages. The importance of understanding and responding to stakeholder needs is emphasized by Gordon-ization et al., (2020) , who underline that effective IMC must consider the perspectives and expectations of various stakeholder groups. Satisfied stakeholders can be

strong advocates for the company, while dissatisfaction can trigger negative reactions that harm the image.

In addition to stakeholder responses, the values, ethics and environmental impact of the business are also very important in Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) strategies, especially those related to sustainable palm tree cultivation. In this industry, environmental and social issues have a significant impact on companies, corporate values, ethics and the environmental consequences of operations are important factors in a company's reputation and image. The extent to which messages in different communication channels represent a company's core values is called value congruence in IMC strategy. For example, a company that is sustainable in terms of palm oil may have values such as sustainability, transparency and social responsibility as primary concerns. According to Rehman et al., (2022) , IMC must be aligned with the company's core values and demonstrate ethics that are in line with the desired company image. This consistency involves choosing communication methods, message topics, and promotional actions that align with social rules and community values. Other environmental impacts are also significant in the sustainable palm oil industry run by IMC. In a period of increasing environmental awareness, Payne et al., (2020) stated that companies that consider environmental factors in developing their IMC strategies will have a greater opportunity to gain support from consumers who are now more concerned about environmental issues. Therefore, companies must consider the environmental impact of promotional campaigns and look for ways to reduce their environmental footprint. The importance of matching values, ethics and concern for the environment is recognized by Tarabieh, (2021) , who states that companies that ignore these aspects will face reputational risks and lose consumer support. This alignment enhances a positive reputation for the company as well as long-term relationships with stakeholders. Overall, incorporating values, ethics and environmental consequences in a sustainable IMC strategy regarding the palm oil industry is essential. This method not only promotes a positive and consistent reputation, but also supports the company's efforts to maintain and increase consumer support.

Conclusion

Based on existing literature, it can be concluded that the Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) strategy implemented by PT. Anugerah Sawit Inti Harapan has a significant impact on the presentation of marketing messages through various communication media. IMC performance evaluation involves assessing message consistency, measuring effectiveness, and identifying challenges. Consistent messaging is the basic platform for building a strong brand reputation, while performance measurement involves the use of consumer sentiment and engagement analysis. Despite the challenges associated with coordination and environmental changes in business, IMC strategies have significant potential to benefit companies in image building. The implementation of IMC not only increases brand reputation, but also has a positive impact in overcoming environmental and social problems in the oil industry. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of the positive impact of IMC on a company's reputation and sustainability is critical to continuing to develop positive relationships with consumers and other stakeholders in complex markets.

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