

## Creating Affirmative Action Through Endorsers in Business Communication

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**Abstract.** The common thread of business communication and marketing communication is in promotional activities. This is because both activities are related to increasing profits or profits. Promotion is a middle ground between business communication and marketing communication to achieve the desired target. There is also a strategy that is considered an affirmative action to achieve the target, namely the use of endorsers in promotional activities in the mass media. The use of endorsers is not as easy as imagined, because there are many things that must be considered and considered in choosing an endorser so that business communication can run effectively and efficiently. Celebrity endorsers and experts are most suitable to be used as a business communication strategy by considering the TEARS concept.

**Keywords:** Affirmative Action, Business Communication, Endorser

### Introduction

In the era of free trade, competition is wide open between business people. The competition is an obstacle in business activities, which can be overcome by business communication activities to create favorable conditions. Business communication is a form of communication that concentrates on business activities. Business communication often involves interpersonal communication, organizational communication as well as marketing communication. The simple purpose of business communication is to convey the business message created by the communicator to his communicator. The most important aspect in the business communication process is the aspect of persuasion. In other words, in business communication requires affirmation or affirmative action (affirmative action) in packaging the message as well as to influence the audience.

Mass media is one component in business communication, where the mass media serves as a channel that makes the link between the communicator (producer) and the communicant (consumer). Business communication practices that occur in the mass media always involve parties outside the producers, which are better known as endorsements. The definition of an endorser is a person who is involved in the communication process to deliver product marketing messages, directly or indirectly. In advertising production, the endorser serves as a spokesperson so that the brand of a product is quickly attached to consumers. The end goal is for consumers to have the will to buy the brand (Royan, 2005).

Because the process of delivering the message is different (directly or indirectly), the effect of the use of the endorsement is also the same, namely consciously or unconsciously by the audience. The use of endorsements in business communication forms a process that will occur between producers and audiences, with outputs so that the business communication process gets great attention and is very easy to remember by the audience.

As has been revealed in a study conducted by Steven Agustinus Hansudoh in an article entitled The Effect of Celebrity Endorsements on Purchase Intentions Through Perceived Value. Where in it explains that endorse has a big influence in shaping the perceptions and desires of the audience (Hansudoh, 2020).

Based on the explanation above, the element of persuasion contained in business communication can be seen that endorsement can be used as an affirmation activity to facilitate business communication activities and deliver it to the communicator's big goal in business communication. From the preliminary description above, there is a formulation of the problem to be discussed, namely: how endorse is used as an affirmation (affirmation) in business communication.

## **Literature Review**

### **Marketing Communication in Business Communication**

Business Communication is the development of forms of communication activities carried out by humans. Definitions related to business communication are usually associated with the definition of communication in general. Where communication in general is a process of sharing meaning through verbal and non-verbal behavior, which usually involves at least two people involving expectations, perceptions, choices, actions and interpretations [3] (Mulyana, 2015).

So in short, business communication can be interpreted as a communication activity used in the business world, which includes various forms of communication, both verbal and nonverbal communication (Purwanto, 2011). While the understanding of business itself according to Lawrence D. Brennan is "a dynamic structure of interchanging ideas, feeling and cooperative efforts to get profit", which is a dynamic structure of the exchange of ideas, feelings and joint efforts for profit (Priyatna, 2009).

From the explanation, it can be seen that the purpose of business communication is to achieve profit in the form of material and non-material. To achieve its goals, business communication can be collaborated with marketing communications. Where marketing communication is a strategy of business communication involving other parties outside the producer (communicator) and consumers (communicant).

In Effendy, 2019 communication is a process to change the behavior of others, (communication is the process to modify the behavior of other individuals). Based on Houvland's opinion above, business communication has the main function to change the behavior of other people towards their communication products. This can be done through marketing communications.

Meanwhile, according to Kottler & Armstrong, marketing is a human activity that is directed to satisfy needs and wants through an exchange process (Kotler, 2018). The combination of business communication practices with marketing communications is also known as integrated marketing communications. The activities in integrated marketing communication are in the form of advertising, personal selling, public relations, sales promotion and direct selling (Uyung, 2017).

### **Gaps in Business Communication**

Difficulties in communicating are often referred to as communication barriers. In business communication, the gap is viewed from three aspects, namely linguistic, practical and cultural. The linguistic aspect is viewed from linguistic problems, where language differences can be a gap. The second aspect is practical, namely the process of implementing business communication. While the cultural aspect is the cultural background in the form of ethnicity and human habits in implementing business communication (Lewis, 2014).

Lewis, 2014 argues that the solution to overcome the gap in business communication is to touch the mindset of the audience and communicators. One way that can be done is through negotiations or business negotiations. The negotiations resulted in a decision. In the decision-making process endorse has an important role to change the mindset of the audience towards a product. The power of endorsement can be formed by the communicator (producer) which is adjusted to the type of product. Business communication is a channel that can encourage the role of endorsers to become affirmations in business activities.

### **Endorsement in Business Communication**

Supporting tools used in advertising for the purpose of marketing a product are called endorsers. In other words, an endorser is a symbol which is also referred to as a direct source which has the function of distributing messages and or demonstrating products or services in promotional activities. The purpose of these activities is to support the effectiveness of delivering the message of the product or service (Belch, 2013).

This is supported by the opinion of Sutisna 2012 the use of opinion leaders is an effective way of marketing. This is due to the tendency of humans to imitate other humans who they consider more than themselves. According to Shimp: 2014 there are four types of endorsers used in business communication, namely:

- a. Celebrity endorsers. Celebrities are people who are well known by the public at large be it movie stars, singers, comedians, athletes, models.
- b. Expert endorser, advertising star who has knowledge and ability in a particular field.
- c. Lay endorser, is a non-celebrity advertising star.

- d. Dead endorser is an advertisement star of a person/character who has died.

Shimp: 2014 also explains that the type of endorser has the same characteristics and attributes, only the difference is in the use of people as supporters, whether the people used as endorsers are famous figures or not.

## Research Methods

This study uses a literature study method by looking for theoretical references that are relevant to the cases or problems found. The theoretical reference obtained by means of a literature study is used as the basic foundation. The author uses primary data by observing and secondary data, namely data obtained from journals, documentation books, and the internet.

Documentation is a method to find data that is considered important through newspaper/magazine articles, journals, libraries, brochures, documentation books and through electronic media, namely the internet, which is related to this research [13] (Moleong, 2017).

Literature study is a method used by the author by collecting data and sources related to the topic raised in a study. The sources used are journals, books, and scientific articles [13] (Moleong, 2017). . Direct observation is carried out by taking data using the eyes without the help of other standard tools for this purpose, namely seeing phenomena related to the topic of this research.

The descriptive method used in this study was carried out by describing the facts obtained and then analyzing them. The description process that occurs does not only describe data and facts, but also provides an understanding and explanation of the suitability and irregularities of phenomena and literature found.

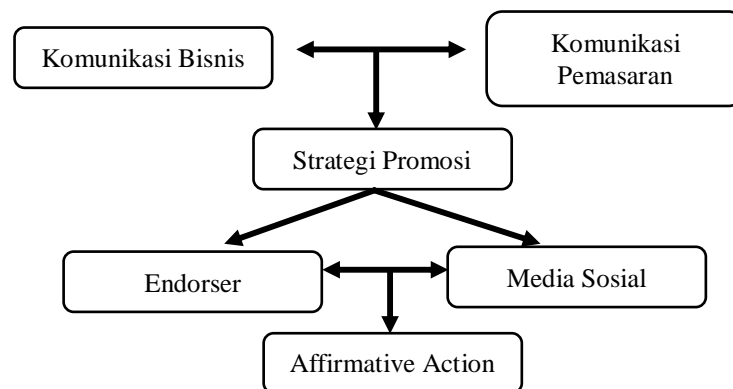


Figure 1. Framework of Thinking

## Results and Discussion

### Use of Endorsers as Affirmative Action

Business communication is often considered as the initial solution in business problems. However, marketing communication is considered as the spearhead in solving problems in business communication. So that in its implementation, business communication can be combined with marketing communication to achieve complete business goals. The goal to be achieved in business communication and marketing communication is profit for producers and satisfaction for consumers. Profit is not the ultimate goal, but the sustainability of the production and distribution process is the ultimate goal. This is because business activities will continue to be sustainable and have a very long life.

In developing business or trade activities, a strategy that can be used from combining business communication with marketing communication is in the form of a promotional strategy. Promotion is done to increase the power of producers in persuading consumers. The ultimate goal is to increase the demand for the product or service provided by the producer. What's more, promotions are used to attract new customers and retain new customers.

In carrying out promotional activities must pay attention to many aspects. In terms of business communication, there are four basic aspects in its application, namely producers, messages, media and consumers. These four aspects will affect the effect of delivering messages from producers to consumers. The distribution of messages usually uses the help of mass media.

Making messages by producers is the first step that determines whether or not the goals of business communication are achieved. The process of making messages is influenced by the experience of the communicator (field of experience) and the frame of reference or thinking (frame of reference). The synchronization of the two will lead producers to form an effective message to influence the consumers they want to target.

Meanwhile, the message that is formed is also adjusted to the conditions and backgrounds of the consumers who want to be targeted. Market segmentation is also a determining factor in the distribution of business communication messages. After the message, the mass media is the next factor that determines the effectiveness of a business communication activity. Mass media is a channel or channel that is used to distribute messages that have been created to have an impact or effect that has a fairly wide distribution. In using mass media, one must also pay attention to the segmentation or distribution of the audience using the mass media. This is done so that the process of delivering messages through mass media becomes effective.

Mass media has a heterogeneous audience with an anonymous distribution. This means that it is certain that audiences who use mass media have different motives. However, what can unite the motives and patterns of the audience is in the form of an endorser. An endorser is a supporter in an advertisement that is able to influence the audience. This usually happens because the endorser can be in the form of celebrities or people who are already popular and known by the audience.

Endorsers do not always have a significant influence on the perspective and interest of the audience. This depends on the accuracy and precision in choosing and using endorsers as supporters of an advertisement in influencing and getting the attention of the audience (consumers). In line with Shimp : 2014 explanation that the right marketing strategy is to use endorsers. The use of endorsers in the form of popular people or celebrities is often known as Celebrity endorser. Where this endorser was chosen because of his achievements, popularity and even reputation.

Endorsement functioned as a stimulant that gives the impression that the message conveyed can be trusted by the audience. Therefore, in using endorsers, celebrities are not the only type of endorsement that can be used to shape perceptions and influence audience perceptions. Another way that can be used to utilize endorsers is through identification of Typical person endorsers. This means that using people who are not from celebrities to serve as endorsers. For example, manufacturers use testimonials from consumers who have experience in using their products. This becomes very effective because testimonials from endorsements provide confirmation or strengthen the reasons for using the goods or services being marketed.

Endorsers who are not from the celebrity circle are often referred to as lay endorsers. When compared to celebrity endorsers, lay endorsers are more economical. Because this non-celebrity endorser is considered relatively inexpensive. However, the advantages of lay endorsers are statements (testimonials) from ordinary people who seem to be without message construction. This means that this is used as confirmation to other audiences regarding the advertised product or service.

The main consideration of advertising that uses a dead endorser is the attractiveness and credibility of a message. The use of credibility to convince the audience. Affirmation comes from the process of remembering the dead endorser. The way it works is almost the same as a celebrity endorser, but what distinguishes a dead endorser is a person who has died, it can be a celebrity or a famous figure other than a celebrity.

In contrast to expert endorsers, namely experts or opinion leaders who are used to help convey messages through advertisements in the mass media. Experts or opinion leaders are people whose opinions about a particular product are followed by people who do not know about the product. Expert endorsers have an important role in word of mouth communication. Marketers know the data of these experts or opinion leaders from lists of names and addresses of people who have inquired by mail about a product in the past. Usually, these people are innovators.

Expert endorsers can be used because they have the experience and competence to rationalize the advantages of a product or service. The reason for conveying the message that marketers or producers use endorses as confirmation of their product or service is that they have the ability to understand the individual or audience they are dealing with. Expert endorsers and celebrity endorsers are classified as endorsers that require high costs. This is due to the competence of the individual who is used as an endorser.

Affirmative action is meant as an affirmative action to be able to provide an overview, change perceptions and even influence the audience. Through four types of endorsers that are often used in Indonesia are celebrity endorsers. Artists or celebrities are still seen as having a high degree.

Celebrity popularity becomes a commodity in affirming the advertised product or service. Indonesian people still use mainstream media in the form of television which is also the cause of the high use of celebrities to promote a product or service. The tendency of the entertainment function in society also makes celebrities the main aid tool in promoting something through the mass media.

Of the four endorsers, the most frequently used in business communication is the celebrity endorser. This is because the aspect of celebrity fame becomes a commodity in itself in conveying messages effectively. The factor that determines the success of celebrity endorsers is the suitability between the product and the celebrity used in promotional activities. The suitability can be seen in terms of age, and the background of the celebrity who endorses the product. The second factor is the suitability of celebrities with market segmentation or target audiences, both of which must have the same goals and backgrounds. The third factor, the level of popularity and credibility of celebrities. Popularity is directly proportional to credibility if you want to use celebrities as endorsers.

### **Endorser Attributes in Affirmative Action**

Shimp: 2014 classifies endorsers into two general attributes and five specific attributes to facilitate and create effectiveness in business communication. Specifically says: "Extensive research has demonstrated that two general attributes, credibility and attractiveness, contribute to an endorser's effectiveness and that each consists of more distinct subattributes...we use the acronym TEARS to represent five discrete attributes: trustworthiness and expertise are two dimensions of credibility, whereas physical attractiveness, respect and similarity (to target audience) are components of the general concept of attractiveness".

There are five specific attributes for endorsers described by the acronym TEARS. There are two dimensions to define celebrity and physical attraction, response, pleasure are components of the general concept of attraction. The TEARS concept can be explained as follows:

#### **Trustworthiness**

The attitude of trust from the image of a product advocate is the main key in the use of endorsers. This relates to the level of honesty, sincerity, and credibility of the source who is used as an endorser. Thus the endorser has the ability to attract attention and at the same time make the audience have confidence in the endorser's actions and words. An important aspect that is prioritized in the use of expert endorsers is the ability to give confidence to the targeted audience as potential consumers of a product. Trustworthiness has several indicators in creating or delivering business communication objectives.

Honesty is acknowledging, saying or providing information that is in accordance with reality and the truth. Sincerity is a willingness to carry out tasks with full responsibility. Can be trusted that has integrity and credibility in conveying the message.

#### **Expertise**

Shimp: 2014 explains that expertise (expertise) refers to the knowledge, experience or expertise possessed by an endorser associated with the endorsed brand. Expertise is a competitive advantage that supporters have to convince and strengthen the audience in terms of their skills. The indicators used to see the endorser's expertise include: knowledge (frame of reference), experience (field of experience), expertise (expert).

#### **Attractiveness**

Shimp 2014 explains that attractiveness or what is known as attractiveness refers to oneself that is considered attractive to look at in relation to the concept of certain groups with physical attractiveness. Voters find something in the endorser that he likes, so persuasion works through identification. That is, through identification, voters will adopt a behavior, attitude or preference. When they find interesting things in the endorser.

An endorser with a good physical appearance and/or attractive non-physical character can support advertisements and can increase audience interest in listening to advertisements [10].

#### **Respect**

Respect is defined as an activity of giving appreciation from the audience to a product after seeing and hearing information from the endorser. Shimp : 2014 explains respect (valued quality) means the quality that is appreciated or liked as a result of the quality of personal achievement. An award is a form of appreciation for a certain achievement given either by an individual or an institution. Celebrities are valued for their acting skills, sports skills or personality and quality of political argumentation. Rewarded individuals are also generally favored, and this can be used to increase brand equity.

### Similarity

Shimp : 2014 explains that similarity (similarity to the intended audience) is similarity to the intended audience (similarity) refers to the similarity between the endorser and the audience in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, social status and so on. This is confirmed by Belch and Belch : 2013 who state that similarity is the audience's perception of the similarities possessed by the endorser, this resemblance can be in the form of demographic characteristics, lifestyle, personality, problems encountered as shown in advertisements and so on.

### Conclusion

The conclusions that can be drawn are as follows: In business communication it is possible to use a marketing communication strategy. This is because business communication has relevance to marketing communication. The similarity between business communication and mass communication in this research is in the promotion strategy. Promotional strategies that use mass media have the power to influence the audience of potential consumers and regular consumers.

In the promotion strategy, endorsers are chosen to be the main strategy in creating effective business communication. The endorser also becomes a symbol for the message to be conveyed. So that in choosing an endorser, it must be based on criteria and pay attention to the type of endorser.

The selection of the use of endorsers is adjusted to the needs of marketers or producers in conveying or promoting the products or services to be marketed. At the same time look at the market segmentation to be targeted.

Celebrity endorsers and expert endorsers are the types of endorsers most often used by advertisers or marketers in influencing and even changing the perception of mass media audiences. This is because both have elements of trustworthiness (trustworthy), expertise (expertise), respect (quality is valued), and similarity (similarity of the targeted audience).

The main factors that must be considered in choosing a celebrity as an endorser are the suitability between the product and the selected celebrity, the suitability between the celebrity and the target audience, and the level of popularity and credibility of the celebrity.

Based on the five elements driving the use of endorsers, endorsers are considered as activities that are able to confirm or strengthen the business communication process to be more effective (affirmative action). It is considered an affirmative action, because the endorser involves all of the communicator's abilities in conveying a message for the ultimate goal of influencing and even changing the audience's perspective on a product or service.

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