

The Role of Communication Management in Enhancing Reputation for Service Excellence: CV. Indonesian Publications

Lutfiyatut Tamamiyah
Universitas Bakrie, Indonesia
Email: Ovitamam@gmail.com

Abstract

The growth of the journal publishing services industry in Indonesia has elevated organizational reputation as a critical success factor. In this trust-based sector, reputation is shaped by the quality of communication throughout the service process. This study examines the role of communication management in building and sustaining a reputation for service excellence at CV. Indonesian Publications. A qualitative case study design was employed with three purposively selected informants: a communication manager, an editorial staff member, and a student service user. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation, and analyzed using an interactive model of data analysis. The company demonstrates effective external communication during client onboarding, generating positive initial perceptions. However, delays in follow-up communication and inconsistent response speed during manuscript processing present reputational risks. Internally, coordination across editorial, technical, and customer service teams is managed through digital platforms and regular evaluations, though workload imbalances periodically disrupt responsiveness. Adaptive, proactive, and relationship-oriented communication systems are essential to sustaining organizational reputation. Synergy between internal and external communication constitutes the primary determinant of client trust and long-term loyalty in the academic journal publishing services sector.

Keywords: communication management; service reputation; strategic communication; journal publishing; service company

INTRODUCTION

The development of the academic world in Indonesia in the last two decades shows an increasing need for scientific publications as part of the assessment of the performance of individuals, institutions, and state policies. Scientific publications are an important instrument in determining student graduation, lecturer promotion, and accreditation of study programs and universities. Policies such as the Regulation of the Minister of Research, Technology, and Higher Education Number 20 of 2017 concerning the Provision of Professional Allowances for Lecturers underlines the importance of publication as one of the indicators of academic performance. As a

result, the demands on publication not only create quantitative needs, but also demand high quality, accessibility, and speed of service. This directly opens up great opportunities for the growth of the scientific journal publishing service industry.

In this context, many business actors have begun to offer publishing services, both nationally (*SINTA*-accredited journals) and internationally (*DOAJ*, *Scopus*, or *Web of Science indexed journals*). However, the industry has unique characteristics: the services offered are intangible, highly trust-based, and often involve complex and technical processes. Therefore, the quality of service in this industry is not only measured by the final results in the form of published articles, but also by the overall customer experience—especially in terms of communication during the service process. In other words, the reputation of a journal publishing service provider cannot be separated from how the company manages communication with its users.

Organizational reputation, in the perspective of Ajayi, (2023), is the result of the community's collective perception of organizational performance, identity, and communication. In the service sector, reputation relies heavily on direct interaction between customers and service providers. Trust is not only built through promises (*promotions*), but through the consistency of the customer's experience in receiving services. Moreover, because service products are invisible, customers cannot judge the quality before the service is run (*experience goods*). Therefore, communication is the main element in forming expectations, explaining procedures, handling complaints, and providing clarity during the process.

In the journal publishing industry, communication management is the main key to creating service excellence and building reputation. According to Brockhaus et al., (2022), communication management is a strategic process that includes planning, implementing, and evaluating the delivery of messages in accordance with organizational goals to the internal and external public. Communication cannot be ad-hoc or reactive, but must be part of a business strategy that is integrated with the service process. Organizations that are able to manage communications effectively will find it easier to build a positive reputation, maintain long-term relationships with customers, and avoid reputational risks.

In this context, CV. Indonesian publications are one of the interesting journal publishing service providers to study. The company actively provides scientific publication services for national and international journals, with the main segmentation of students, lecturers, and researchers in Indonesia. In terms of operational strategy, this company has placed communication as one of the foundations in providing services. However, the challenge of maintaining consistency, speed of response, and internal coordination is still an important issue that affects customer perception.

The results of an interview with one of the service users, namely a student, reinforced the importance of communication in shaping the experience and perception of service quality. The student said that his initial experience using CV services. Indonesia's publications are relatively positive, especially in terms of explaining procedures, initial consultation, and the professional attitude of staff during onboarding. The information is conveyed clearly and friendly, making customers feel comfortable and confident in starting the publication process. However, when the process was underway, the student highlighted the delay in follow-up communication, especially when wanting to know the status of the manuscript. Responses from publishers are sometimes slow or require follow-up from customers. In fact, for customers who have academic deadlines, up-to-date information is crucial.

These findings suggest a gap in the consistency of external communications, especially in the mid-stages of the service process. Although the customer said that the editorial staff provided patient and communicative guidance in the revision process, the shortcomings in the aspect of

response speed were an important note. The quality of communication in service is not only seen from one stage, but from the entire customer experience. Good initial communication can be tarnished if it is not followed by responsive and informative follow-up communication. Therefore, consistent and customer satisfaction-oriented communication management is a need that cannot be ignored.

In practice, CV. Publications Indonesia has established good internal communication through coordination between editorial, technical, and customer service teams. The use of digital platforms such as WhatsApp Group, Trello, and Google Drive allows for collaboration and transparency across teams. Regular evaluations are also carried out to assess the effectiveness of work and reduce errors. On the external side, companies actively use digital channels to establish relationships with users, including through social media, educational webinars, and official emails.

However, as can be seen from user feedback, good communication efforts must be continued with a more proactive, personalized, and real-time approach, especially when dealing with questions or complaints. Companies also need to be more transparent in conveying technical obstacles, estimated work time, and corrective steps in case of delays. Without honest and prompt communication, customers can feel ignored or abandoned, which can ultimately damage reputation.

As a service organization, CV. Indonesian publications need to continue to apply the principles of strategic communication, as stated by Falkheimer & Heide, (2022), which include narrative planning, channel selection, two-way engagement, and message evaluation. Thus, reputation is not only the result of the final product (published article), but also of the customer's experience during interaction with the service provider. Communication that is humanistic, transparent, and consistent will strengthen positive perceptions and shape customer loyalty.

On the other hand, research in this field is still relatively minimal. Most studies of communication management are still focused on corporate, manufacturing, or public service industries. There have not been many studies that specifically highlight how communication management is applied in the journal publishing industry. In fact, the context of this industry is unique because it is directly related to the academic world which has high expectations for integrity, quality, and speed of information. This research is here to fill this gap and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the importance of communication in creating service excellence and organizational reputation.

In this context, a number of studies have shown a close link between communication management and organizational reputation. Research conducted by Brockhaus et al., (2022) emphasizes the importance of corporate communication as the main instrument in building image and reputation, especially in the service industry. Ajayi, (2023) developed a framework on reputation as the cumulative result of consistent organizational communication and actions from the perspective of multiple stakeholders. Falkheimer & Heide, (2022) also broaden the understanding of strategic communication as a planned communication management process to positively shape public perception.

Other research such as the one conducted by Siano et al., (2013) proves that consistent and valuable communication can increase customer trust in service companies. Meanwhile, Tkalac Verčič et al., (2024) highlight the importance of organizational responsiveness in building long-lasting relationships with its public. In the academic sector, research by Macnamara, (2016) shows that higher education institutions and academic service providers need an open and dialogical communication system to maintain the trust of academics and students.

Research by Ihlen et al., (2011) also shows that synergistic external and internal communication can form a strong corporate identity, which in turn influences external reputation. In the case of digital-based service companies such as publishing online journals, research by Kent & M Taylor, (2016) on dialogic theory of public relations emphasizes the importance of two-way communication in building a relationship-based reputation, not just the transmission of one-way messages. In addition, studies by M. L. Kent & Taylor, (2021) show that an organization's involvement in interactive digital communication has a major influence on the formation of customer trust.

Furthermore, studies by Butkouskaya et al., (2023);Cornelissen, (2023) confirm that strategically integrated communication between various channels, both online and offline, can strengthen an organization's overall reputation. Research by V Luoma-Aho, (2015) also provides a framework on how organizations can build 'reputational capital' through continuous and adaptive communication of public input. In more specific sectors such as the publication of scientific journals, a study by Silva et al., (2015) emphasizes that transparency and consistency of communication in the editorial process play an important role in improving the credibility and reputation of publishers.

However, there is a striking research gap in the context of the journal publishing services industry in Indonesia, especially in examining in depth how communication strategies contribute to the development of a reputation for superior services. Most of the existing studies still focus on the technical aspects of publishing, journal indexing, and content quality, without comprehensively exploring relational and communicative aspects. In fact, in practice, customer perception and experience of publishing services are greatly influenced by how communication is carried out by the company, both internally and externally.

The urgency of this research lies in the need for a more comprehensive understanding of communication practices in shaping reputation in the developing scientific publishing services sector in Indonesia. In the academic world that increasingly relies on publications as a performance indicator, publishing service providers play an important role as academic partners. Thus, their reputation is not only determined by the success of publishing articles, but also by the quality of the communicative interactions they build with clients.

This research has practical significance in providing strategic recommendations for journal publishing service companies to design communication systems that are able to increase customer satisfaction and loyalty. On the other hand, his academic contribution lies in the expansion of strategic communication studies into the academic services sector which has been relatively underexplored. The novelty of this research also lies in its qualitative approach that combines the results of interviews, observations, and documentation to form a complete picture of organizational communication practices.

The main objective of this study is to explore and analyze how communication management is carried out by CVs. Indonesian publications in an effort to build and maintain a reputation for superior service. The research questions asked are: (1) How are internal and external communication strategies carried out by CVs. Indonesian publications in forming a reputation for superior service? (2) What communication factors affect customer perception and satisfaction with the services provided? (3) What is the relationship between strategic communication and organizational reputation in the context of scientific journal publishing service companies?.

By answering these questions, this research is expected to be able to make a real contribution to the development of strategic communication management in the publishing services sector, as well as become a reference for similar companies in building a sustainable reputation through a planned, adaptive, and customer experience-oriented communication approach.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research design with a case study approach (Yin, 2018), selected because of its capacity to provide an in-depth and contextual understanding of communication management dynamics within a specific organizational setting. CV. Indonesian Publications was chosen as the research site through purposive sampling, given its active role in providing national and international scientific journal publication services and its well-established internal communication system.

Data were collected through three complementary techniques: (1) in-depth semi-structured interviews with three purposively selected informants—a communication manager, an editorial staff member, and a student service user as triangulator; (2) limited participatory observation of communication flows via WhatsApp, email, and social media platforms; and (3) documentary analysis of internal communication SOPs, client reply email templates, and official social media content. The research was conducted over approximately two months. Data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, (2014), comprising three iterative stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Trustworthiness was ensured through four criteria established by OC Enworo, (2023), who operationalised the criteria of Lincoln and Guba, namely: credibility (source triangulation and member checking), transferability (thick description), dependability (audit trail), and confirmability (objectivity of analysis). All informants provided informed consent prior to their participation, and their identities were kept strictly confidential.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study type to describe in depth the phenomenon of communication management in building a reputation for superior service in the journal publishing service industry, with a focus on CV. Indonesian publications as the main unit of analysis. The qualitative approach was chosen because it is able to comprehensively explore the meaning, perception, and dynamics of communication that occurs between organizations and stakeholders. This method also allows researchers to capture complex and contextual social realities holistically, according to the characteristics of communication interactions in services that cannot be explained quantitatively alone.

Case studies are used to explore specific phenomena in real-world settings (Yin, 2018). In this case, CV. Indonesian publications were chosen purposively because they have characteristics that are in accordance with the research objectives, namely as a company that is active in national and international journal publishing services and has an organizational communication system that has been running in a structured manner. The focus of the study is directed to understand how communication management strategies are implemented, what are the challenges faced, and how they impact on the perception and satisfaction of service users.

The data collection technique was carried out through three main sources, namely: in-depth interviews, limited participatory observation, and documentation. In-depth interviews are the main technique for digging up information from various perspectives. Resource persons were selected purposively, including communication managers, editorial staff, and customers (in this case students who use services) as triangulators. This approach allows researchers to gain a balanced understanding between the provider and the service user. Interviews are conducted in a semi-structured manner with open-ended question guidance, thus allowing for the development of questions based on the informant's answers.

To strengthen the validity of the data, the researcher also conducted limited participatory observations, namely by observing the flow of communication between service staff and customers

through email interactions, social media, and instant messaging service platforms such as *WhatsApp*. In addition, additional data is obtained through documentation, including internal communication *SOPs*, copies of reply emails to clients, service information templates, and official company social media content. These documents are analyzed to find out how the company structures the message, the communication style used, and the frequency and consistency of information delivery.

The data analysis process was carried out using an interactive model from Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) which includes three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion/verification. The data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation is first reduced through transcription processes, grouping by theme, and the elimination of irrelevant information. Furthermore, the data is presented in the form of a thematic narrative that describes the dynamics of communication management in the organization. The last stage is to draw conclusions from field findings, by cross-verifying between data sources (triangulation) to ensure the validity of the information.

To maintain the validity and trust of the data, the researcher applied four criteria from Lincoln and Guba (1985), namely: *credibility*, *transferability*, *dependability*, and *confirmability*. *Credibility* is maintained by triangulating data sources and *member checking* informants to ensure the accuracy of information. *Transferability* is achieved by describing the research context in detail so that it can be applied to similar cases. *Dependability* is strengthened by recording the audit trail of the research process, while *confirmability* is achieved by maintaining the objectivity of the analysis and using verified data.

The location of the research is the CV office. Indonesian publications that operate in a hybrid manner (*online* and *offline*). This research was carried out for approximately two months, with a division of time for planning, data collection, analysis, and reporting results. In terms of research ethics, the researcher first conveys the purpose of the interview and ensures the confidentiality of the informant's identity. Each informant has given *informed consent* to participate voluntarily.

Using the qualitative method of case studies, this research is expected to produce an in-depth understanding of how the role of communication management is carried out in real terms in forming a reputation for superior services, as well as provide contextual practical recommendations for similar service companies in improving the effectiveness of their communication.

CONCLUSION

This study found that CV. Indonesian Publications has implemented reasonably effective external communication during the initial onboarding stage, characterized by informative and professional explanations of service procedures. However, a responsiveness gap was identified in the later stages, specifically in the form of delays in manuscript status updates, which potentially disadvantages clients facing strict academic deadlines. Internally, inter-divisional coordination operates through digital platforms (*WhatsApp*, *Trello*, *Google Drive*) and regular evaluations, although periodic workload imbalances occasionally disrupt the consistency of external communication. This study extends the discourse on strategic communication into the scientific journal publishing services sector a field that remains largely underexplored while identifying clarity of initial information, responsiveness, empathetic communication, and openness to feedback as the primary determinants of organizational reputation within the academic services industry. Service companies of a similar nature are encouraged to design periodic communication calendars for clients, provide empathetic communication training for staff, develop web-based manuscript tracking dashboards, and conduct regular communication audits. Further studies are recommended

to adopt a comparative approach across multiple journal publishing institutions, as well as to examine the role of digital communication technologies such as chatbots and automated tracking systems in enhancing user experience in the era of digital transformation.

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