

Smart Public Relations and Building Corporate Identity through Social Media

-A Case Study of Condor Electronics Company –

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Abstract:

This study aims to explore the mechanisms employed by electronic public relations to enhance and build the corporate identity through social media networks at Condor Electronics Company. The field study was conducted using interviews with the internal audience to understand the process of electronic public relations in building the corporate identity via social media platforms, conducted on May 30, 2024. A questionnaire was also distributed electronically to a sample of 58 respondents. The case study methodology was used, and several key findings were reached. One of the main findings is that the communications production department performs all the functions related to electronic public relations due to its significant importance and its role in creating a positive image for the company.

Keywords: Smart Public Relations, Corporate Identity, Social Media.

الملخص:

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التعرف على الآليات التي تقوم بها العلاقات العامة الإلكترونية لتعزيز وبناء الهوية المؤسسية عبر شبكات التواصل الاجتماعي بشركة كوندور للإلكترونيات، حيث تم إجراء الدراسة ميدانيا باستخدام أداة المقابلة بالنسبة للجمهور الداخلي لمعرفة آلية سير العلاقات العامة الإلكترونية في بنائها لهوية المؤسسة عبر مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي، وكان ذلك بتاريخ 30 ماي 2024، و تم كذلك الاستعانة بأداة الاستبيان وتوزيعها إلكترونيا على عينة عددها 58 مبحوثا، حيث استخدم منهج دراسة الحالة، وتم التوصل إلى مجموعة من النتائج أبرزها أن قسم الإنتاج الاتصالي يمارس كل الوظائف الخاصة بالعلاقات العامة الإلكترونية نظرا لأهميتها البالغة ومساهمتها في خلق الصورة الطيبة للشركة الاجتماعي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: العلاقات العامة الذكية، هوية المؤسسة، مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي.

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INTRODUCTION:

The corporate identity is one of the essential issues that institutions must prioritize, especially in the current era. Successful large institutions have managed to establish a positive image with their audiences through various strategies, starting with a strong foundation for their identity, particularly in the intangible aspects, and maintaining and promoting this identity to differentiate themselves from other institutions. This helps ensure easy recall among the institution's audience and ultimately shapes a positive mental image of the institution.

One of the modern tools that institutions rely on to build and enhance their identity is "electronic public relations." This approach, which focuses on employing modern communication technologies and their multiple media platforms to manage communication activities and public relations functions electronically, plays a crucial role in strengthening corporate identity and creating a favorable image of the institution. Ultimately, successful communication depends on employing effective communication methods and elements to create a positive impact and win the support of the institution's audience, thus forming a positive image of the brand.

Social media platforms represent a revolutionary communication tool in our time, making the world feel like a "small village." Most of the global population now uses these platforms for their communication needs, and most public and private institutions now promote their policies and services through these social media platforms. Electronic public relations have become a vital tool for managing institutional accounts on social media, as these platforms offer numerous advantages for communication and research functions. They allow institutions to study the virtual audience and assess the image of the institution in their minds, and most importantly, to build the corporate identity through these platforms using the institution's brand name

I. Methodological Procedures of the Study:

1. Study Problem:

Public relations are essential communication activities in the life of institutions and companies. They involve both internal and external communication strategies, with the goal of building and maintaining a favorable image of the institution. Public relations play a significant role in influencing the audiences of organizations and winning their support. This is achieved by employing successful communication methods, with particular attention to the tools and media used. Researchers note that "public relations emerged in the context of commercial companies that believed satisfying their audiences was key to maintaining their status." Public relations grew from a small practice at the end of the 19th century to become a counterpart to advertising in the mid-20th century. As a result, public relations became an integral part of the activities of institutions and companies striving to gain public trust and support, prompting business owners and institutional leaders to hire public relations specialists and utilize media channels to communicate with various audiences (Abdennaser, 2009).

From this historical context, we can conclude that the primary goal of public relations has always been to influence and gain the trust of the public by using various communication tools. Public relations have always focused on using effective communication channels to influence the audience. Thus, the communication medium is a critical element in the process of transmitting messages to the institution's audience, and public relations focus on utilizing all available and effective communication tools.

On the other hand, technological advancements in wired and wireless communications have evolved from the analog systems of early telecommunications to the digital systems and satellites that reshaped the communication landscape. The greatest communication revolution occurred with the invention of the Internet, which significantly surpassed all previous communication technologies. The Internet brought with it tremendous benefits, including fast

communication that transformed society into a "small village." This transformation gave rise to websites and social media platforms.

The communication revolution driven by the digital system and the advent of the Internet led to significant changes in public relations practices. Public relations shifted from traditional methods to modern electronic forms. Today, most institutions and companies that maintain communication and public relations offices have adopted an electronic communication model, relying on computers and digital tools as primary means of communication (Elmashaqaba, 2015). This marks the rise of "electronic public relations."

The emergence of this modern form of public relations, due to advancements in communication technologies, allowed public relations functions to be performed

electronically using new tools, such as computers, electronic databases for internal and external audiences, and selecting social media platforms for extensive interaction. Electronic public relations have given official communications a new dimension, where decisions that once required physical posting are now sent via email to employees, clients, or the public to promote the institution's services, news, and activities.

It is well known that comprehensive electronic public relations utilize all available communication tools, but in the digital age, the Internet has become the most widely used communication medium in public relations, due to its ease of use and low cost. In this context, Samia Aouaj notes that "researchers in public relations agree that the Internet has had a positive impact on the practice of public relations." Shel Holtz believes that the Internet is one of the most widely used tools in public relations, as it has changed how organizations communicate internally and with external audiences. This was confirmed by a survey conducted by Springston on 750 public relations practitioners regarding the use of the Internet, where the majority agreed that the Internet contains the main components of communication (Samia, 2019).

One of the key concepts for all those working in institutions, including practitioners of electronic public relations, is "corporate identity." Any institution or company seeks to build its identity so that it is recognized by its audience. This concept encompasses both the intangible characteristics of the institution, such as its values, goals, and culture (referred to as the "intangible identity"), as well as the visual characteristics, such as the brand, color schemes, and designs that represent the symbolic aspect of the institution's identity (referred to as the "visual identity"). Additionally, the "communication identity" element outlines the communication practices of the institution.

Building corporate identity is crucial in shaping the institution's image in the minds of its audience. Therefore, institutions initially focus on constructing a solid identity, particularly in its intangible aspects, while maintaining its visual elements for display to the audience. Once an institution has built its identity properly, it serves as a benchmark for audience perceptions of the institution. Ultimately, having a strong corporate identity, encompassing both intangible and visual components, leads to the creation of a positive image for the institution. The relationship between corporate identity and mental image is complementary, as the corporate identity is essential in shaping the mental image, and if the image is affected, the identity is directly impacted as well.

The expansion of interactive communication tools and the rise of social media platforms have opened up vast opportunities, especially in the business sector. This has led every institution or company to adopt these platforms for their electronic public relations activities, using platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and others to promote and define their corporate identity by highlighting both intangible and visual components. Social media platforms have become a new communicative element in the institution's identity, given their remarkable

communication advantages and the growing use of these platforms by virtual consumers to access information about products in the market, replacing traditional media.

This is also the case for Algerian institutions. One example is Condor Electronics, a well-known company producing household electronics and communication products such as smartphones. Condor has a dedicated communication office that practices electronic public relations through social media platforms to promote its identity by extensively sharing electronic content and materials with external audiences under the company's brand name. Based on Condor Electronics' available communication elements, such as the existence of a communications production office and its practice of electronic public relations using social media platforms, we have selected it as the case study for this research in order to answer the central question :

What role does electronic public relations play in building the corporate identity of Condor Electronics through social media ?

2. Research Questions :

To address the above issue, we have several sub-questions, which are formulated as follows:

- What are the practices of electronic public relations at Condor Electronics?
- How do users of social media interact with the content of electronic public relations at Condor Electronics?
- What is the impact of electronic public relations on the intangible component of corporate identity at Condor Electronics?
- What is the impact of electronic public relations on the visual component of corporate identity at Condor Electronics?
- What is the impact of electronic public relations on the communication component of corporate identity at Condor Electronics?

3. Study Hypotheses:

- **Main Hypothesis:**
 - Electronic public relations play an effective role in enhancing and building the corporate identity of Condor Electronics through social media platforms.
- **Sub-Hypotheses:**
 - Condor Electronics uses electronic public relations for a variety of electronic communication practices.
 - The external audience interacts with the electronic communication content of Condor Electronics through partial engagement.
 - Electronic public relations have a strong impact on the intangible component of corporate identity at Condor Electronics.
 - Electronic public relations have a strong impact on the visual component of corporate identity at Condor Electronics.
 - Electronic public relations have a strong and effective impact on the communicative component of corporate identity at Condor Electronics.

4. Methodology and Type of Study:

4.1 Study:

The methodology used in this study is the case study method, defined as “a methodology aimed at collecting scientific data related to a specific unit, whether an individual, an institution, a social system, or a community, based on an in-depth study of a particular stage in the history of the unit or studying all stages it has gone through, with the goal of reaching scientific generalizations related to the studied unit and others similar to it (Shalabi, 1997).” The reason

for choosing this methodology is the nature of the study and its suitability for research concerning institutions and companies.

4.2 Type of Study:

This study belongs to descriptive research, which is defined as "a systematic collection of facts about a particular group. It is used to study phenomena or research problems in their current state, as a scientific effort to gather data, information, and descriptions about the phenomenon (Mohamed Elfatih Hamdi, 2019)." Given the nature of the variable, which involves the role of electronic public relations in building corporate identity through social media, this study falls under mixed-method research, focusing on describing the role of electronic public relations at Condor Electronics.

5. Study Tools:

In this study, various tools were employed, including the questionnaire, interview, and observation, due to the mixed-method nature of the research topic.

5.1 Questionnaire:

The questionnaire was designed for the external audience who follow Condor Electronics' social media platforms. The questionnaire was distributed electronically via Google Forms to 58 respondents, specifically targeting followers of Condor Electronics on social media, through comments and direct messages. Data collection was analyzed using SPSS software.

The electronic questionnaire is essentially a survey that is similar to traditional paper forms but is designed for the internet. It allows respondents with internet access to complete the survey, with responses automatically saved electronically. Google Forms is one such tool that allows the creation and distribution of questionnaires online, with responses stored in a Google Sheets format for analysis (Mahmoud Tishouch, 2023).

5.2 Interview:

The interview tool was applied to the internal audience, specifically the public relations team and one of the communication officers responsible for social media platforms at Condor Electronics. The aim was to understand how electronic public relations are utilized to build the company's identity via social media and assess the communication department's engagement with public relations activities on these platforms.

5.3 Observation:

The observation tool was used to capture certain aspects that were not obtained through the interview at Condor Electronics. These observations were made spontaneously and allowed us to record data that provided insights for analyzing responses from the interviews and the questionnaire, which were not fully captured by the other tools.

6. Research Community and Study Sample:

6.1 Research Community:

The study's community consists of competing commercial institutions, particularly those producing electronic devices, and the audience following the social media pages of these electronics-producing companies.

6.2 Study Sample:

- For the internal audience (public relations team), the sample was drawn from the employees in Condor Electronics' communications department. The sampling method used was **purposive sampling**, which is based on selecting a sample that is thought to accurately represent the original community. This method is informed by the

researcher's prior knowledge, allowing the sample to reflect the population's characteristics as closely as possible (Rawia bint Ahmed al-Qahtani, 2020).

- For the external audience (followers of Condor Electronics on social media), the **accidental sampling** method was used, where the researcher selects cases that come across in the course of the study. For example, respondents were selected randomly from people browsing social media platforms, such as through public comments and private messages (Atef Adali al-Abd, 2009). The reason for this choice was the wide and dispersed user base of Condor Electronics' social media followers, making it difficult to pinpoint a specific group. Therefore, the questionnaires were distributed randomly through comments and direct messages.

7- Study Areas:

7-1 Human Area:

This study was conducted on the internal audience (employees) of the media production department at Condor Electronics, as well as the followers of the company's official social media pages for the external audience.

7-2 Temporal Area:

An official interview was conducted with one of the communication officials on May 30, 2024. The electronic survey was distributed over a period of three consecutive days from June 10 to June 12, 2024.

7-3 Spatial Area:

The interview took place in the media production department at Condor Electronics, located opposite the Krystor company near the center of Bordj Bou Arreridj, Algeria. The survey was distributed through the virtual space on social media, specifically via Condor's Facebook page and Instagram account, by copying and sending the link in comments and private messages to followers.

8- Operational Definition of Study Concepts:

8-1 Smart Public Relations:

It refers to the tools and modern electronic communication techniques used by the public relations department at Condor Electronics to perform public relations tasks electronically, with the aim of promoting the company's identity and enhancing the value of its brand.

8-2 Information Technology:

It refers to the tools used for processing and storing information using electronic media and various devices, such as computers and the internet, within the public relations office of Condor Electronics.

8-3 Electronic Communication:

This is the communication process through which the company interacts with internal and external customers and audiences using electronic communication technologies and digital systems, to convey the company's decisions and announcements.

8-4 Corporate Identity:

It refers to the efforts made by Condor Electronics to solidify its culture, values, and goals, and to showcase these aspects to the internal audience through internal communication channels, and to the external audience through external communication channels, using a consistent visual system in terms of design and colors to enhance its distinction from other institutions.

8-5 Social Media:

These are social platforms like Facebook and Instagram used by the public relations department at Condor to interact with the external audience, provide information about the brand, and gather feedback from followers.

II. Field Aspect of the Study:

1- Presentation and Analysis of Survey Results:

The field study represents one of the key stages in scientific research, where quantitative and qualitative results from the questions posed in the survey are analyzed. The objective of this study is to answer the subsidiary questions identified in the methodological framework.

Table No. 01: Distribution of sample members based on whether they visit Condor's social media pages.

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	41	70.7%
No	17	29.3%
Total	58	100%

The source: Authors using spss program

The results indicate that the majority (70.7%) have visited Condor's social media pages. The 29.3% who haven't visited can be attributed to factors such as age or lack of interest in the content related to electronic products. This can be explained by the fact that some searchers did not browse social media pages due to many factors, the most important of which are: Elderly people with technological illiteracy do not use social media sites, Condor pages do not reach as many social media users as possible, some do not care about content related to electronic products and others.

Table No. 02: Distribution of sample members based on which Condor social media pages they follow.

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Facebook	43	71.7%
Instagram	7	11.7%
LinkedIn	3	5%

YouTube	7	11.7%
Total	60	100%

The source: Authors using spss program

The results show that Facebook is the most followed platform by participants, with 71.7%. This can be attributed to the preference of the Algerian community for Facebook, due to its ease of use and accessibility, making it the most effective social media platform for Condor's strategy.

Table No. 03: Distribution of sample members based on the types of posts they follow on Condor's social media pages.

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Product advertisements	39	46.4%
Historical posts	3	3.6%
Religious posts	10	11.9%
Interaction with competitions	14	16.7%
Cooking recipes	6	7.1%
Exclusive company news	12	14.3%
Total	84	100%

The source: Authors using spss program

The results show that most followers interact with posts related to product advertisements, reflecting the marketing focus of the company's social media strategy. This confirms us once again that followers are mostly consumers, as we have already indicated. This is theoretically explained by the fact that a marketing company operates and the nature of its communication is marketing. This is often demonstrated by the advertising strategies that it uses to publicize, which appear on social media sites. The effectiveness of these strategies makes the public more sensitive to its advertising messages. Furthermore, Condor was able to satisfy users' wishes after studying his behaviour, satisfying his needs and showing them connectivity, which makes us say that there is a compatibility between what is theoretical and what is practical about this aspect.

Table No. 04: Distribution of sample members based on their opinions about the female personalities featured in Condor's advertisements on social media.

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Acceptable culture	30	51.7%
Incompatible with my culture	8	13.8%

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Neutral	20	34.5%
Total	58	100%

The source: Authors using spss program

The results indicate that the majority (51.7%) consider the female personalities in the advertisements to be compatible with their culture, while there is a percentage of neutral respondents (34.5%) and a small group of dissenters (13.8%). by answering them with an option. "Incompatible with my culture", it can be explained that the followers of the Condor page are the most male women. According to the statement of one of the company liaison officers, they hire women in advertising, and perhaps the largest proportion of those who show that they are not opposed are women who admire Condor. While neutral and opposition parties are mixed men and women, this is due to adherence to religious values and the teachings of Islam, it can be said that Condor seeks through social media to take into account and respect all the cultures of the masses and to personalize each audience of his culture, which makes us say that there is a compatibility between what is theoretical and what is on the ground about the public's studies and culture and commitment to them.

Table No. 05: Distribution of sample members based on the background color they associate with the images on Condor's social media pages.

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Navy Blue	43	74.1%
Gray	3	5.2%
Pink	9	15.5%
Other colors	3	5.2%
Total	58	100%

The source: Authors using spss program

According to Table five data, the majority of researchers following Condor's 74.1% page know the background colour of the photos that Condor posts across its nighttime blue pages, through their choice of blue colour. Those who know the background colour of the photos in pink are as much as B: 15.5% by choosing a pink option, while researchers who know its colour and colour backgrounds are both 5.2%. This can be explained by the fact that most of the researchers who chose blue are aware of the original colour of the background and perhaps they are the loyal followers of Condor's pages while those who know it in pink are feminist audiences who have been exposed to pink background images. And as for those who chose grey and other colours, they were by chance exposed to leaflets with pictures of those backgrounds, Finally, we can say that there is a compatibility between what is theoretical and what is practical about the visual construction of the institution's identity with Condor regarding the colour background. So, The results show that navy blue is the most distinctive color in Condor's designs, reflecting the high visual awareness of the followers.

Table No. 06: Distribution of sample members based on how they became aware of the Condor brand.

Options	Frequency Percentage	
TV advertisements	38	65.5%
Large street posters	5	8.6%
From retailers	6	10.3%
Through company-sponsored programs	1	1.7%
From friends and family	6	10.3%
Total	58	100%

The source: Authors using spss program

The data shows that most participants discovered Condor through TV advertisements, indicating that this medium is the most effective for promoting the brand. Table six shows that the majority of searchers using social media sites, estimated at 65.5%, identified the Condor brand through publicity that was by newspapers and magazines, while researchers who identified it by sellers of Condor products or by friends and family, rank 10.3% lower, while researchers identified it by large social media posters were 8.6% lower than those identified by social media 1.7% for researchers who identified it through Condor-sponsored programs such as cooking programs, This can be explained by the fact that, despite varying ratios in options, we can explain that each of the researchers' followers prefers a particular means of communication. Based on the data we received from the interview regarding the comprehensive use of institutional means of communication, these answers indicate that Condor works academically on the organization's communications, that it uses all means of communication and that there is a successful use of the comprehensive communication policy.

Table No. 07: Distribution of sample members based on the products they have purchased from Condor.

Options	Frequency Percentage	
Classic phone	9	15.5%
Smart phone	10	17.2%
Refrigerator	10	17.2%
Hair straightener	1	1.7%
Water heater	2	3.4%
Heater	1	1.7%
TV	8	13.8%
Tablet	14	24.1%
Desktop computer	1	1.7%

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Air conditioner	1	1.7%
Didn't purchase	1	1.7%
Total	58	100%

The source: Authors using spss program

From Table seven, it is clear that the majority of the interviewees, whose proportion is estimated to have 24.1% purchased an electronic board as a product of Condor, and the proportion of 17.2% repeated twice, were for smartphone and refrigerator options and for the searchers who purchased the previous producers as for the researchers who bought the television product from Condor, they accounted for 13.8%. The investigators who bought the water heater from Condor had a small proportion of 3.4%. As for the estimated 1.7%, 5 options were repeated by researchers. After reading these comparative data, we find that most researchers prefer to acquire modern means of communication. This indicates the high ratios around the procurement of an electronic board and a smartphone. Condor is known to be accessible to all and suits the Algerian people's intake. Despite the varying ratios, we note that the company is committed to its message and sales promises towards its customers, whether by means of telecommunication or and there we can say that there is an academic commitment both in terms of communication and in terms of marketing. So, the data reveals that the most purchased products by participants are tablets and smartphones, indicating the audience's preference for modern technological products offered by Condor.

Table No. 08: Distribution of sample members based on their opinion about the visual identity of Condor's brand.

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Very appealing	29	50.0%
Acceptable	13	22.4%
Average	10	17.2%
Unattractive	6	10.3%
Total	58	100%

The source: Authors using spss program

The results show that the majority of respondents (50%) find Condor's brand identity very appealing, which reflects the effectiveness of the company's visual design strategy in attracting the target audience.

2- Presentation of Interview Results:

Data was collected from an interview with the communication official in the media production department at Condor Electronics, and the findings revealed that the department uses partial communication techniques through the internet and email. The company began its

electronic public relations work in 2012 in response to the growing use of the internet in Algeria.

3- Evaluation of Results Based on Hypotheses:

The results were compared to the study hypotheses, and it was found that all hypotheses were confirmed:

- **First Hypothesis:** The media production department uses electronic public relations.
- **Second Hypothesis:** There is partial interaction with the external audience with electronic content.
- **Third Hypothesis:** Electronic public relations have an impact on building the institution's identity.
- **Fourth Hypothesis:** Strong impact on the visual component of the identity.
- **Fifth Hypothesis:** Electronic public relations influence institutional communication.

Conclusion:

The study concludes that electronic public relations play a crucial role in facilitating communication activities and enhancing Condor Electronics' identity on social media. In the future, the development of artificial intelligence may lead to the creation of smarter corporate identities through modern communication.

Our outlook can be drawn from what we actually notice. We can say that due to the terrible development of communication technology and its applications and the tremendous development of computer software and its smart applications, what is known as the intelligent construction of an enterprise's identity through smart PR, Artificial intelligence will make the company work on its identity by relying on its technologies without making the most effort by entering orders. The computer can execute what the designer wants due to its speed of execution and making electronic communications activities carried out in a programmed manner. The work of the communicators is easy. These platforms may also become social media platforms that provide other daunting features such as giving enterprise users opportunities to store their publications with the enterprise's software in which they publish.

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