

# Marketing Communication Strategy of Cihampelas Walk Bandung to Attract Visitors During the Covid-19 Pandemic Through the Bandung Plant Festival Event (Case Study at Cihampelas Walk Mall, Bandung)

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## Abstract

*In general, this study aims to determine the form of planning, analyze the form of marketing communication strategies and, examine the success of marketing communication strategies for the Bandung Plant Festival Event at Cihampelas Walk Bandung. This type of research is descriptive where this research has a main objective to describe the nature or temporary situation by walking at the time of the research being conducted and examining the causes of a particular symptom. With this type of descriptive research, it will explain and describe the problems regarding how the marketing communication strategy of Cihampelas Walk Bandung in attracting visitors during the covid 19 pandemic. The data collection techniques used in this study were observation and interviews. Respondents in this study were one of the tenants at Cihampelas Walk, one of the sellers at the Bandung Plant Festival Event, and visitors to the Bandung Plant Festival. The results of this study are Cihampelas Walk in attracting visitors during the Covid-19 pandemic through the Bandung Plant Festival Event using planning by having a target audience, positioning and choosing an agency or work partner. The marketing communication strategy carried out by Cihampelas Walk in attracting visitors during the Covid-19 pandemic through the Bandung Plant Festival Event by implementing market segmentation, event objectives, designing marketing communication messages, communication channels, and marketing communication mix which contents such as event marketing, sales promotion, direct marketing, and digital marketing.*

## Keywords

cihampelas mall; marketing;  
covid-19



## I. Introduction

A shopping center or commonly referred to as a mall is a place that is made with a modern concept following the times from time to time. Mall is a place that has a fairly broad meaning because a building consists of various kinds of shops, such as supermarkets, clothing stores, bookstores, cellphone stores, game stores, electronics stores, places to eat or hangouts, and is equipped with facilities such as air conditioners lifts, escalators and parking lots.

In Indonesia, especially in big cities such as Jakarta, Bandung, Surabaya, Bali and Medan, there are dozens of malls that are very wide with different characteristics to attract visitors. According to Alexander Stefanus Ridwan (Winarto, 2020) said "shopping center managers are also more innovative and creative in creating shopping centers as destinations through attractions, promotions, and designs that accommodate the needs of

their market segments. It is not uncommon to find a number of shopping centers that are so popular as selfie spots.”

Bandung has a unique concept mall, namely Cihampelas Walk, which was inaugurated in 2004. This mall offers a natural atmosphere combined with a shopping center building. This concept is not only aimed at malls but for outdoor tourism. Cihampelas Walk is surrounded by green plants and trees, this open space provides a special experience for visitors, especially the air in the city of Bandung is still very cool. Of course, this mall is in great demand by both visitors in the city and outside the city. The outbreak of this virus has an impact of a nation and Globally (Ningrum et al, 2020). The presence of Covid-19 as a pandemic certainly has an economic, social and psychological impact on society (Saleh and Mujahiddin, 2020). Covid 19 pandemic caused all efforts not to be as maximal as expected (Sihombing and Nasib, 2020).

However, in March 2020, Covid-19 hit the world, including Indonesia. This makes people afraid to visit crowded places including malls or shopping centers. Moreover, on April 22, 2020, Ridwan Kamil announced PSBB (Large-Scale Social Restrictions), and caused the Mall to be temporarily closed until June 15, 2020 (Kodrat, 2020).

The Shopping Center did re-open on June 15, 2020, but visitors are still minimal amid the growing number of COVID-19 cases. According to a report by the Indonesian Shopping Center Management Association (APPBI), the average number of mall visits only touched 30 percent. This amount is even smaller than the maximum limit of visits set during the Transitional PSBB of 50 percent of the total capacity of each mall (Nuryanti, 2021)

According to Stefanus Ridwan (Jannah, 2020) "a number of malls are starting to plan a strategy to provide offers and hold small-scale events to attract visitors to come and shop at the mall".

This prompted the Cihampelas Walk Team to create several events to encourage visitors. Event marketing has a big role in marketing communication activities. Event Marketing has a great influence on grabbing the attention of consumers, because events are organized in the form of events and create a happy mood. So that people are more interested in visiting it.

Unfortunately, in June 2021 Indonesia was hit by the second wave of Covid-19. This caused Ridwan Kamil as the Governor of West Java to impose an Emergency PPKM and limit activities at the Mall from June 19, 2021 to August 16, 2021.

Mall reopening due to PPKM dropping to Level 3, Mall re-opening on August 16, 2021. It's different like PSBB in 2020. The regulations are more stringent and there are provisions regarding Vaccines to enter the Mall. This really makes mall visitors drop drastically. Chairman of the Indonesian Shopping Center Management Association (APPBI) Alphonzus Widjaja emphasized that the reduction in the Jakarta-Bali PPKM level to level 3 does not necessarily increase the level of visitors to shopping centers or malls (Layan, 2021).

Talking about the Mall certainly cannot be separated from visitors. To increase visitors, it is necessary to know what motivates potential visitors. To increase visitors to a mall, it is necessary to do this marketing, because visitors can be influenced by marketing techniques for certain malls because it is not only for one special motivation to visit the shopping center.

Talking about marketing then this is related to communication planning. Because the basic elements of marketing are product, place, price and promotion or also called the marketing mix (marketing mix, where of the four marketing elements, promotion is an element that is related to communication planning. Communication is thus an important

element in supporting effective marketing. The emergence of communication as an element that supports marketing will form a marketing triangle, namely: product/service, communication, and market/investor. Because a product to be marketed requires promotion (Cangara, 2013:76). David J. Rahman stated that the principle of commercial marketing i.e. the process of planning and pricing, promoting and disseminating ideas,

The success or failure of a communication program or a development program that requires communication basically depends on the planning itself. According to D. Gomez (1993) talking about communication planning is related to communication policy (Cangara, 2013:63). The communication policy is a long-term strategy that must be translated into operational planning. The elaboration of communication planning from policy to operations through communication strategies. In this case, communication strategies are tips or tactics that can be used in carrying out communication planning.

The use of communication strategies can be implemented in various fields, including marketing through the implementation of events. In carrying out marketing so that it is carried out optimally and optimally, an effective communication strategy is needed starting from planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating. With the implementation of the right communication strategy in carrying out the promotion and marketing of the Mall, it is expected to increase the number of visits to the Mall. The Bandung Plant Festival event held by Cihampelas Walk is also expected to be maximal and optimal in increasing visits to the Mall.

Cihampelas Walk in an effort to promote the potential of the event has also been included and made into a web-site. The web-site usually contains various Event profiles. Information such as discounts are also displayed on the web site. Some web sites have not been managed properly. An example of this can be seen on the Cihampelas Walk web site <https://www.ciwalk.com>. However, the marketing strategy through exhibitions has been carried out so far, creating a web site and distributing books/brochures has not been effective enough. It takes more than just printing books/brochures and creating a web site to market the Mall.

## **II. Research Method**

This research method is descriptive where this research has a main objective to describe the nature or temporary situation by running at the time of the research being conducted and examining the causes of a particular symptom. This descriptive research is also more focused on highlighting new problems and explaining the occurrence of something rather than explaining more about the situation of a phenomenon (Neuman, 2013, p. 44).

With this type of descriptive research, it will explain and describe the problems regarding how the Cihampelas Walk Bandung marketing communication marketing strategy in attracting visitors during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This research was conducted through a qualitative approach. A qualitative approach is a type of approach that performs an overview of a phenomenon in a particular approach, then this will affect the procedures in the research (Creswell, 2015, p. 94).

This qualitative research is used to examine the object by explaining in depth. This research is considered relevant to use because it describes the state of objects that exist in the present qualitatively based on the data obtained from this study. Qualitative research is intended to obtain clear and factual descriptions and information on how the Cihampelas Walk Bandung communication marketing strategy in attracting visitors during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **2.1 Object of research**

The object of research is an issue, problem or problem that is discussed, studied, researched in social research (sociologis.com) From this definition the author captures the object of this research is the implementation of the Bandung Plant Festival event in attracting visitors during the COVID-19 pandemic. Increasing visitors is the object of research from this writing.

## **2.2 Unit of Analysis**

The unit of analysis is a certain thing that is taken into account as the subject of the research. This unit of analysis can be interpreted as something related to the focus or component to be studied. The unit of analysis in a study can be in the form of individuals, groups, objects, regions, and certain times according to the focus of the problem (Pujileksono, 2015, p. 12).

From this, it is a core part in developing a concept and observing the concept using existing data analysis. In this study, the unit of analysis is the Cihampelas Walk Bandung communication marketing strategy in attracting visitors during the COVID-19 pandemic through the Bandung Plant Festival event.

## **2.3 Data Collection Methods and Sources**

Methods and data collection are determined in several aspects, including: paradigm, approach, method, nature of research, and research objectives (Pujileksono, 2015, p. 119). In the implementation of this data collection using interview and observation techniques

### **a. Interview**

Interview is a data collection technique by asking directly or face to face to insightful respondents in order to obtain in-depth information (Sugiyono, 2013). Interviews aim to observe the behavior of individuals or groups and can find out their opinions and beliefs and what changes in their personalities and conditions (Emzir, 2014, p. 50-51). In this study, interviews were conducted to obtain accurate information from the Marcomm Cihampelas Walk Bandung division, the person in charge of the Bandung Plant Festival event, one of the tenants at Cihampelas Walk, one of the sellers at the Bandung Plant Festival Event, and Bandung Plant Festival visitors.

### **b. Observation**

Observation is a way to see a phenomenon or symptom being studied by taking notes, observing, and taking notes during observations (Neuman, 2013, p. 57). In this study, the researcher used a non-participant observation technique, because the researcher only observed the data obtained through the communication marketing team on the increase in visitors and did not directly participate in the observed group activities.

## **2.4 Data analysis method**

Methods and data analysis in this study include: data reduction data presentation and verification as described by (Sugiyono, 2013, p. 70). Data analysis in qualitative communication research is basically developed with the aim of making sense of the data, interpreting, or transforming the data into narrative forms which then lead to scientific findings that ultimately come to a conclusion. end (Prawito, 2007, p. 101).

#### **a. Data reduction**

Data reduction is summarizing, choosing the main things, focusing on things that are important, looking for themes and patterns. Thus, the reduced data will provide a clearer picture and make it easier for researchers to conduct further data collection and look for it when needed. With this data reduction carried out by researchers is to process the results of interviews and other data obtained will be summarized and focused on results that can answer questions and formulate research problems.

#### **b. Data Presentation**

Presentation of data can be done in the form of brief descriptions, charts, relationships between categories, flowcharts and the like. By presenting the data, it is hoped that it will make it easier for researchers to plan further work.

#### **c. Verification**

After performing data reduction and data presentation, conclusions are drawn. The initial conclusions put forward are temporary and will change if no strong and supporting evidence is found at the next stage of data collection. However, if the conclusions raised at an early stage are supported by valid and consistent evidence when the researcher returns to the field to collect data, then the conclusions put forward are credible conclusions (Sugiyono, 2013, p. 252).

In this study, the data analysis technique used is existing data and comes from the results of interviews and observations with resource persons which will later be analyzed as data sources. Then the existing data will be adapted to the concepts used in this study.

### **III. Result and Discussion**

The results of research conducted through interviews with resource persons, observation, collection of documents in the form of hard copies and websites. It is known that the marketing communication program implemented by Cihampelas Walk in communicating the Bandung Plant Festival Event will be described further below.

#### **1. How to Plan the Bandung Plant Festival Event at Cihampelas Walk Bandung**

Marketing communication strategy planning for Cihampelas Walk in carrying out the Bandung Plant Festival Event. As explained by Mr. Yogi as Cihampelas Walk Communication Marketing.

*"Okay, so we get acquainted with one of the real eos. Continuing to chat, it turns out that he is a plant lover. Then talking for a long time, I just wrote an event here, I said. That's a great idea, the mother said, I have many acquaintances in Cihedeu in Lembang and others for this program. And what is certain is because this is MSMEs, direct farmers. Then for rental we help and the benefits for this plant also increase. Then look for farmers for the exhibition, followed by those who have plant businesses. If the outside is specifically for cheap plants, so the formation of this exhibition is just a coincidence, so it's not like a mall in Jakarta that makes an event that is really good, right. So that we can also help in the decoration of this event so that it looks good"*

The identification process must begin with a proper analysis of the target. In carrying out the plant exhibition at Ciwalk, it has been arranged in such a way. For the placement of plants has also been considered.

In carrying out the exhibition, it is clear that it has a vision and mission to be addressed in the cast. The vision and mission to be addressed will be a reference to determine what strategy will be used in the event that will run later. This is in line with the opinion of Mrs. Meri Selaku Head of Event Bandung Plant Festival.

*"Surely we have to look at the opportunities, what are these people looking for. What is it, that moment is really necessary, right? That's it. Let's see, what are the needs of this buying community? What plants are booming? I have made this exhibition 3 times, Ms., the 2nd I also sponsored by the Bank. The third one I am not sponsored. Well, if I'm here, I'm more interested in working directly with the farmers, really, Ms. That's why my plants are not expensive either. Actually, I have also been asked by Mr. Yogi. I'm just saying that the moment is not yet, because now it's Eid. Then the second one, I also have to really look for ideas, what are the trends that I have to see too, Ms. So, so that our exhibition is eagerly awaited by people, so you have to be well prepared. So actually I think I want to do an exhibition of endemic Indonesian plants. While collecting and searching, it turns out that not many people use plants endemic to Indonesia. endemic plants are forest plants*

## 2. How is the marketing communication strategy for the Bandung Plant Festival Event at Cihampelas Walk Bandung.

Marketing communication is one of the determining factors for the success of marketing strategies and programs at Cihampelas Walk in attracting visitors during the Covid-19 pandemic through the Bandung Plant Festival Event. It can be seen from the increased traffic in the implementation of the Bandung Plant Festival Event that has been carried out by Cihampelas Walk. As explained by Mr. Yogi as Cihampelas Walk Communication Marketing

*"For the age segmentation itself, which is still middle and above, because who wants to buy expensive plants if they don't have more money? So the people who come are unique, yes, those who buy plants are up to tens of millions. And what is unique is that there are kitchen plants, so everything is complete with fruit too"*

Because the plants on display are expensive plants, therefore the target chosen is to go up to the top for the first exhibition. As for the second exhibition, the target is the lower middle class with the plants on display according to their budget. In this second exhibition, there are more types of plants in the exhibition. The third exhibition is also still aimed at the lower middle class with an exhibition of orchids.

Cihampelas Walk advertises for the Bandung Plant Festival Event using Instagram, Facebook and radio social media accounts. For radio, Cihampelas Walk parties do advertisements a day, there are eight advertisements per radio, with 4 radios owned by Cihampelas Walk. Visitors also suggested Cihampelas Walk to do promotions through social media accounts such as Instagram, Facebook, player marketing and so on to better reach the wider community to come see the events held by Cihampelas Walk. If seen from the picture that has been presented above, it can be seen that Cihampelas Walk has carried out promotions on its personal facebook account.

## 3. How the Success of the Bandung Plant Festival Event at Cihampelas Walk Bandung

The successful implementation of the Bandung Plant Festival event that has been carried out is something that has been awaited from what was planned at the beginning. This success will have an impact on Cihampelas Walk in increasing visitors during the Covid-19 pandemic. Since the Bandung Plant Festival event, it has proven that Cihampelas Walk traffic is increasing well, especially after the emergency PPKM is over.

Visitors gave their opinions on events that have been carried out by Ciwalk so that the event will be better in the future. With the event that has attracted many customers, visitors hope in the future to have a special store in Ciwalk to sell plants, based on this the event organizers can use the visitor's pendapar as evaluation material in the implementation of this event.

The purpose of the evaluation here is to measure the results of the ongoing process and the objectives of the plan, so that corrective action can be taken at the right time if deemed necessary. These corrective actions can be in the form of changes in targets or plans, in accordance with new environmental conditions and situations.

Input from visitors must also be considered in order to make the event and Ciwalk better. With the addition of promotional players and publications on social media, it can create good traffic for Ciwalk and the events it will hold. Based on input from one of the visitors to Ciwalk, it is hoped that the traffic around it will be in order to avoid congestion. Ciwalk parties can coordinate with the authorities in terms of traffic. In addition, Ciwalk needs to add other events or promos such as influencers or celebrities.

### **3.1 Bandung Plant Festival Event Planning at Cihampelas Walk Bandung**

Ciwalk marketing communication strategy planning is as follows:

#### **1. Identifying Your Target Audience**

In terms of identifying the audience, the first step to implementing a marketing communication strategy is to analyze the target market to determine the tricks and strategies taken by business actors to gain consumer sympathy in facing competitors. Not only that, another important step in determining the audience is to analyze the extent to which consumers know the company's image, product image, and competitor's image. Before carrying out the process of Ciwalk's marketing communication activities in attracting visitors during the Covid-19 pandemic, he had analyzed its target market for middle to upper class people.

#### **2. Positioning**

*Positioning* is one of the efforts to form the image of a product that is related to the emergence of other products on the market. This is strategic where Ciwalk attracts visitors during the Covid-19 pandemic by holding the Bandung Plant Festival Event for people who have a hobby of caring for and caring for plants. Ciwalk also provides relatively cheap prices in the events it organizes so that it can be reached by consumers.

#### **3. Choosing an Agency or Partner**

To carry out a strategy it is necessary to have cooperation between other businesses. Likewise, Ciwalk collaborated with the Event Organizer to conduct the Bandung Plant Festival Event to attract visitors during the Covid-19 pandemic. That way, in establishing a relationship with business relations, you must always listen to complaints and suggestions from consumers so that consumers feel valued. Thus, it will provide its own added value to business development, especially the brand of a product.

### **3.2 Marketing communication strategy for Bandung Plant Festival Event at Cihampelas Walk Bandung**

Based on the results of the study, there are several steps taken in marketing communication activities carried out by Ciwalk in the Bandung Plant Festival Event to increase visitors carried out in marketing communication activities carried out by Ciwalk, namely:

1. Market segmentation

Ciwalk determines market segmentation or target audience is a strategy by planning the target market to be addressed. Target audiences can be seen from various categories such as society in general or certain and individuals or groups.

2. Event Objectives Implemented

The purpose of the event carried out by Ciwalk in informing the product that is being displayed directly to the public is in accordance with what is described by Sulaksana (2003) where a communicator must understand what information must be conveyed to the target audience. In addition, it is important for communicators to know how to inform the message so that the message can be well received by the target audience.

3. Marketing Communication Message Design

Ciwalk conveys a message in the form of giving cashback to buyers by cooperating with a bank based on a minimum purchase of Rp. 150.000., then you will get cashback worth Rp. 100,000., so that Ciwalk's invitation will attract buyers to come and buy exhibition items

4. Communication Channel

In running the Bandung Plant Festival Event using communication channels contained in marketing communications, such as: *direct marketing* carried out by Ciwalk which educates farmers to participate in the event. As well as for other activities such as using *digital marketing* Ciwalk parties use social media accounts to promote the event they are currently holding.

5. Marketing Communication Mix

Ciwalk also uses marketing communication tools that can connect events with plant-loving communities.

### 3.3 The Success of the Bandung Plant Festival Event at Cihampelas Walk Bandung

The successful implementation of the Bandung Plant Festival event that has been carried out is something that has been awaited from what was planned at the beginning. This success will have an impact on Ciwalk in increasing visitors during the Covid-19 pandemic. Since the Bandung Plant Festival event, it has proven that Ciwalk traffic is increasing well, especially after the emergency PPKM is over. At the beginning of the implementation there were 18 booths, the second exhibition had 20 booths, the third exhibition had 10 booths because the third one was in a tight time but not empty of visitors who came. The longer the event, the better, by adding a booth

## IV. Conclusion

1. Ciwalk in attracting visitors during the Covid-19 pandemic through the Bandung Plant Festival Event uses planning by having a target audience, positioning and choosing an agency or partner.
2. The marketing communication strategy carried out by Ciwalk in attracting visitors during the Covid-19 pandemic through the Bandung Plant Festival Event by implementing market segmentation, event objectives, designing marketing communication messages, communication channels, and marketing communication mix which contains events such as events marketing, sales promotion, direct marketing, and digital marketing.
3. The successful implementation of the Bandung Plant Festival event that has been carried out is something that has been awaited from what was planned at the beginning. This success will have an impact on Ciwalk in increasing visitors during the Covid-19

pandemic. Since the Bandung Plant Festival event, it has proven that Ciwalk traffic is increasing well, especially after the emergency PPKM is over. At the beginning of the implementation there were 18 booths, the second exhibition had 20 booths, the third exhibition had 10 booths because the third one was in a tight time but not empty of visitors who came. The longer the event, the better, by adding a booth. Ciwalk in attracting visitors during the Covid-19 pandemic through the Bandung Plant Festival Event has gone well.

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