

When Coffee Meets Sustainability: Building Green Brand Awareness Through Integrated Marketing Communication

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Abstract

Increasing competition in the food and beverage industry encourages brands to implement effective marketing communication strategies to build brand awareness, particularly those that emphasize sustainability values. This study aims to analyze the communication strategy of the “NAKOLABORASI X DAUR BAUR” campaign conducted by Kopi Nako in building brand awareness. This research applies the Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) concept, focusing on experiential marketing, social media marketing, and community-based marketing, and relates it to the concept of brand awareness. The study employs a descriptive qualitative method with a case study approach through in-depth interviews, observation, and document analysis. The findings indicate that the integrated communication strategy contributes to increasing Kopi Nako’s brand awareness, particularly green brand awareness, where the brand is not only recognized but also associated with sustainability values.

Keywords: Communication strategy; brand awareness; IMC; sustainability; Kopi Nako;

INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of Indonesia’s coffee industry has intensified market competition, particularly among local coffee shop brands targeting urban millennials and Generation Z consumers. As the number of coffee brands continues to increase, competition is no longer limited to product quality but extends to brand positioning and communication strategy. In a saturated market environment, brands must differentiate themselves through integrated and value-driven communication approaches.

Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) has emerged as a strategic framework that integrates various communication elements including advertising, digital marketing, public relations, sales promotion, and experiential marketing into a consistent and unified brand message. IMC emphasizes message consistency and synergy across channels to strengthen brand equity and ensure effective audience engagement. In the digital era, where media consumption is fragmented, cross-channel consistency becomes increasingly crucial to build strong brand awareness.

Brand awareness, as conceptualized in brand equity theory, consists of multiple levels: brand recognition, brand recall, and top-of-mind awareness. Strong awareness increases the likelihood that consumers will consider a brand during purchase decisions. Previous studies have explored IMC implementation in retail and service industries; however, limited research has examined how IMC strategies are implemented in sustainability-based collaborative campaigns within the coffee industry. The growing consumer concern regarding environmental sustainability has encouraged brands to incorporate sustainability values into their communication strategies. Campaigns that integrate environmental responsibility into brand narratives can create emotional engagement and strengthen brand associations.

Kopi Nako, a local Indonesian coffee brand established in 2018, launched the “Nakolaborasi x Daur Baur” campaign as a sustainability-driven collaboration focusing on plastic waste recycling and creative reuse initiatives. The campaign aimed not only to promote environmental awareness but also to reinforce Kopi Nako’s brand awareness through integrated communication efforts.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze how Kopi Nako implemented an Integrated Marketing Communication strategy in the “Nakolaborasi x Daur Baur” campaign and how this strategy contributed to building brand awareness. This research provides academic contribution by expanding IMC studies in the context of sustainability-oriented campaigns in the competitive coffee industry.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach using a case study method. The research object was the “Nakolaborasi x Daur Baur” campaign conducted by Kopi Nako. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with internal stakeholders involved in campaign planning and execution, field observation at selected outlets, and document analysis of social media content and campaign materials. The selection of informants was conducted purposively based on their direct involvement in the campaign.

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis by identifying patterns related to the implementation of Integrated Marketing Communication elements. The analysis focused on three primary IMC components: digital marketing and advertising, experiential marketing, and public relations/community engagement. Data validity was strengthened through triangulation of sources and methods.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

IMC Implementation in the Nakolaborasi Campaign

The findings indicate that Kopi Nako implemented an integrated communication strategy by aligning multiple communication channels under a unified sustainability narrative. The campaign demonstrated cross-channel consistency and strategic synergy, reflecting core IMC principles.

Digital Marketing and Advertising

Social media platforms, particularly Instagram and TikTok, functioned as primary communication channels. The campaign content emphasized visual storytelling, behind-the-scenes recycling processes, collaborative activities with Daur Baur, and sustainability-focused messaging. This approach reflects IMC’s principle of message consistency. Visual identity, tone of communication, and sustainability narratives were aligned across digital platforms, strengthening brand recognition. Consumers were not only exposed to the brand logo but also to repeated sustainability-related messaging, reinforcing associative awareness. Moreover, digital storytelling enhanced brand recall by embedding sustainability narratives into engaging and shareable content formats. The consistent exposure increased the likelihood of Kopi Nako being remembered within the competitive coffee market.

Experiential Marketing

Experiential marketing was implemented through offline activation, including outlet design elements incorporating recycled materials and collaborative events. Consumers were invited to directly experience the sustainability concept, transforming the coffee shop visit into an immersive brand interaction.

From an IMC perspective, experiential marketing served as a reinforcement mechanism. The alignment between online communication and offline experience created a cohesive brand message. This integration strengthened brand recall, as consumers associated their physical experience with previously encountered digital narratives. Experiential reinforcement also enhanced emotional engagement, which plays a significant role in strengthening brand awareness levels beyond simple recognition.

Public Relations and Community Engagement

The collaboration with Daur Baur and creative communities reflected a strategic public relations approach. Community involvement generated earned media exposure and user-generated content, expanding campaign reach organically. This relational approach aligns with IMC’s emphasis on long-term relationship building rather than short-term promotional impact. The participation of communities increased message credibility, positioning Kopi Nako as genuinely committed to sustainability rather than merely conducting symbolic marketing. Community engagement further strengthened associative awareness, linking Kopi Nako with environmental responsibility and creative collaboration.

IMC Synergy and Its Impact on Brand Awareness

The integration of digital marketing, experiential marketing, and community engagement in the Nakolaborasi x Daur Baur campaign demonstrates that IMC effectiveness lies in cross-channel synergy rather than isolated communication efforts. Each channel reinforced the same sustainability narrative, ensuring message consistency and strategic coherence. This finding aligns with Jusuf (2024), who argues that Integrated Marketing Communication strengthens brand awareness through consistency of messaging and broader audience reach. However, while Jusuf (2024) discusses IMC in a general context, the present study extends this understanding by embedding sustainability values into an integrated communication framework.

Within the brand awareness framework, the campaign contributed to multiple awareness levels. First, consistent visual identity and repeated sustainability messaging across Instagram, TikTok, and offline touchpoints strengthened brand recognition. This supports the findings of Hidayat et al. (2022), who found that integrated digital storytelling across platforms enhances awareness and engagement. However, unlike their study, which focused solely on digital integration, the Nakolaborasi campaign combined digital storytelling with experiential activation, creating stronger reinforcement effects.

Second, brand recall was strengthened through narrative-driven content and experiential reinforcement. This finding resonates with Febriyantoro (2020), who identified that digital marketing communication increases brand awareness through engaging audiovisual content. Nevertheless, Febriyantoro's study did not incorporate sustainability messaging or offline experiential elements. The present research suggests that recall becomes more meaningful when communication is supported by tangible brand experiences.

Third, the campaign successfully built associative awareness by linking Kopi Nako with sustainability values. This supports the argument of Butar-Butar et al. (2023), who emphasize that increasing green awareness encourages sustainable consumption behavior. However, while their study focuses on consumer behavior outcomes, this research highlights the strategic role of communication in constructing green brand associations. Similarly, Utami et al. (2024) found that green awareness significantly influences purchasing decisions, yet their study employed a quantitative approach and did not analyze the communicative processes behind awareness formation. The present study fills this gap by demonstrating how sustainability positioning is strategically constructed through IMC.

Moreover, community collaboration strengthened credibility and emotional attachment, consistent with the findings of Pramysawyr and Ovalia (2023), who argue that integrated digital storytelling fosters emotional engagement. Nevertheless, the Nakolaborasi campaign expands this perspective by incorporating community-based sustainability initiatives, which enhance authenticity and trust. This supports Jia et al. (2023), who suggest that sustainability marketing, when combined with credible brand positioning, promotes responsible consumer behavior.

The synergy between symbolic communication (digital narratives) and tangible experiences (offline activation) created a cohesive brand perception. Unlike prior studies that examine IMC, green awareness, or digital marketing in isolation, this research demonstrates that sustainability-oriented IMC can simultaneously strengthen recognition, recall, and associative awareness. Thus, the findings suggest that IMC strategies embedded with value-driven narratives are more effective in building meaningful green brand awareness compared to fragmented promotional tactics.

CONCLUSION

The “Nakolaborasi x Daur Baur” campaign demonstrates that an Integrated Marketing Communication strategy can effectively build brand awareness when supported by message consistency, cross-channel integration, and experiential reinforcement. By integrating digital marketing, experiential marketing, and community engagement under a unified sustainability narrative, Kopi Nako successfully strengthened brand recognition, recall, and associative awareness. The campaign positioned Kopi Nako not only as a coffee provider but as a sustainability-driven and

socially responsible brand. This study highlights the strategic importance of IMC in competitive industries and provides empirical insight into how sustainability-oriented campaigns can enhance brand awareness through integrated communication efforts.

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