

## Akulaku E-Commerce Company's Public Relations Marketing Strategy in Building Brand Awareness

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**ABSTRACT:** This research aims to analyze the marketing public relations strategy of Akulaku E-Commerce Government in raising brand awareness. The purpose of this research is to find out and understand the marketing public relations strategy of Akulaku, including its obstacles and corresponding possible solutions that could be implemented by Akulaku by using theory of public relations strategy, and brand awareness. Thus, the research method used was a qualitative approach which consisted of data contents collected through in depth interview. In-depth interviews were obtained from internal informants which are the member of the Business Development division. The results of the research revealed that there is a successful marketing public relations strategy by Akulaku to build brand awareness to the publics. However, on the other hand, there are also obstacles and some public relations strategies that have not been implemented by Akulaku to raise brand awareness. Therefore, Akulaku is expected to utilize all existing public relations strategies at their disposal, as well as to improve their promotion and incessantly implement more online methods in order to increase brand awareness and maintain their status as a platform that is believed to be one of the main virtual credit e-commerce applications.

**KEYWORDS:** communication, public relations marketing strategy, public relations strategy, brand awareness, Akulaku

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### I. INTRODUCTION

Technology in this era is moving so fast that it makes many people compete to make a living in making a living through this technology. According to Susanto (2013) Information Technology is a study, design, implementation, development, support or management of computer-based information systems, especially in computer hardware and software applications.

Various mass media that use computer hardware and software applications include electronic media and cyber media (new media), namely the internet. Both types of media are very helpful for us in carrying out our daily lives which of course are also widely used by some people to do business. Internet new media is certainly very embedded in our lives to carry out various activities such as learning, downloading books online, chatting with friends without using sms or telephone credit, ordering online vehicles, and even making transactions for shopping.

One of the platforms that is currently predicted by many people because it has many features is E-commerce. This new media has features that benefit the user such as online balances, QR codes and even online instalments that make people more comfortable in shopping and dare to make transactions because of the level of security they have.

Taken from Rahmati's research (2009) E-Commerce stands for Electronic Commerce which means a marketing system with electronic media. E-Commerce includes distribution, sales, purchases, marketing and services carried out in an electronic system such as the Internet. E-Commerce is the process of purchasing goods and services over the Internet using secure connections and electronic payments (Sulianta, 2009). In other words, E-Commerce is an online buying and selling platform that only opens a stall for sellers so that they can sell without being limited by place and time.

Based on the theory above, in Indonesia there have been many E-commerce start-ups authorised by the Indonesian government. Among them such as Tokopedia, Shopee, Lazada, JD ID, etc. However, many of them only focus their strategy only on sales without giving importance to P2P (peer to peer) Lending and application security that guarantees. One of the companies that use this method is the e-commerce company Akulaku Silvr Indonesia. As many people know that Akulaku is a savings and loan company that helps its customers to make transactions that can be paid in instalments.

There are four types of E-Commerce based on its characteristics according to Kotler (2007). The first characteristic is Business to business (B2B), where business partners who already know each other and have established a long business relationship, data exchange between partners that has been repeated and mutually agreed upon and the commonly used model is peer to peer. Where processing intelligence can be distributed by business partners.

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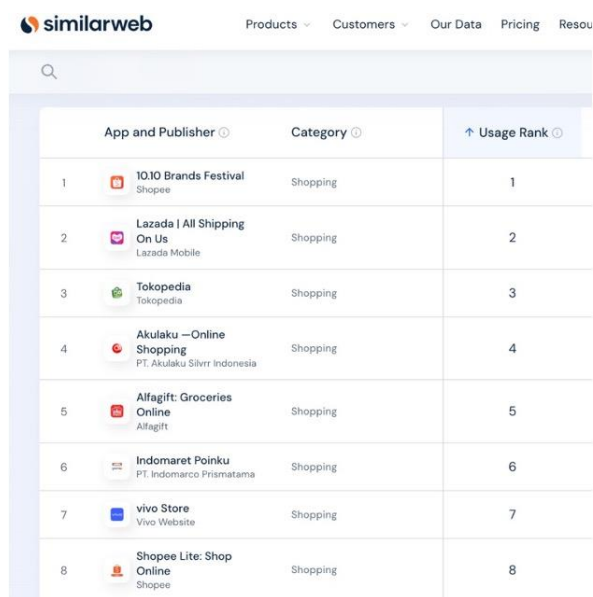
The second character is also called Business to consumer (B2C), where in this character it is open to the public where information can be disseminated to the public as well. The services used are open to the public so that they can be used by many audiences. The service used is a service that is based on demand, so the audience must be able to respond well to consumer requests where the system is referred to as a client-server approach.

The next character is called Consumer to Consumer (C2C), which is a business model where the website not only helps to promote selling goods but also provides online money transaction facilities. There are two main indicators for a marketplace website system: all online transactions must be facilitated by the website and can be used by individual sellers. The activities that take place must use online transaction facilities such as third-party accounts to ensure security when making transactions. In this case, the seller will only receive payment after the goods are received by the buyer. As long as the goods have not been received by the buyer, the seller cannot withdraw the proceeds from the sale and if the product fails to reach the buyer's hands, the money paid will be returned to the buyer.

The last character according to Kotler is Consumer to Business (C2B). The opposite of business to consumer (B2C), in consumer to business, consumers act as value creators where companies will become consumers electronically. According to Hsueh (2017), Peer-to-Peer Lending is an Internet-based business model that fulfils lending needs between financial intermediaries. This system is aimed at small to medium-sized companies where bank loan requirements may be too high. The advantage of Peer-to-Peer Lending is that it has lower costs and is more efficient than traditional banks.

Akulaku is one of the largest online financial virtual credit application companies in Southeast Asian markets such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam and the Philippines. Akulaku application is a web portal or digital platform business application with commercial purposes that has been registered as an electronic system provider at the Ministry of Communication and Information. In carrying out online credit activities, Akulaku uses one of the affiliated companies, namely PT. Akulaku Finance Indonesia, a finance company that has been registered and has an official business licence from the OJK (Financial Services Authority) with Proof of Registration No.KEP-436/NB.11/2018.

**Image 1. Web App Chart Rate for Online Shopping 2024**



App and Publisher	Category	Usage Rank
10.10 Brands Festival Shopee	Shopping	1
Lazada   All Shipping On Us Lazada Mobile	Shopping	2
Tokopedia Tokopedia	Shopping	3
Akulaku —Online Shopping PT. Akulaku Silvr Indonesia	Shopping	4
Alfagift: Groceries Online Alfagift	Shopping	5
Indomaret Poinku PT. Indomarco Prismatama	Shopping	6
vivo Store Vivo Website	Shopping	7
Shopee Lite: Shop Online Shopee	Shopping	8

**Source: similarweb.com, publication year 2024**

In the Similar Web data on 22nd January 2024, Akulaku is in the fourth position of the most visited and downloaded online buying and selling application by the public where Akulaku has managed to maintain its position since 2020 when viewed from App Annie data, IOS Top App Charts.

## II. METHODOLOGY

This research uses a qualitative approach in describing the phenomena in the research. By conducting qualitative research, the author can describe and describe the case through the interpretation and answers of the sources, without having to use statistical methods or by using certain calculation methods.

According to Sugiyono (2019), a research method is a procedure carried out scientifically to achieve goals in obtaining detailed and useful data for researchers.

### **III. LITERATURE REVIEW**

One of the Marketing Public Relations strategies carried out so that the public knows Akulaku by setting marketing goals, selecting messages and means of Public Relations, implementing plans and evaluating results through Kotler and Keler's (2016) research, namely 7 tools from MPR. Some MPR tools used by Akulaku companies are Publications, Events, Sponsorships, Public Service Activities and Media Identity. The strategy has been carried out by the Akulaku Company, but not all the tools they do. The tools in question are such as News and Speeches, because there are still many people who miss the news about Akulaku in the mass media compared to other E-Commerce Platforms due to the lack of news coverage of Akulaku and the lack of press conferences (speeches) so that not many media can cover updates from Akulaku and result in less awareness from the public.

One of the Public Relations strategies carried out is to keep the business up to date. For example, Akulaku developed a business that was previously just an online lending platform, but now it has been developed into E-Commerce. Where Akulaku opens a stall for merchants to be able to work together to sell their goods at Akulaku which is combined with the previous system, namely online credit without a card just like other E-Commerce.

### **IV. RESULTS**

Akulaku is an online forum or online media, but it can be said that Akulaku uses various platforms. The platform is the media, content and users of Akulaku itself. So Akulaku is an online e-commerce platform that sells various household needs online and is one of the online selling platforms that uses a virtual credit system.

The results of the analysis of research on PT E-Commerce Akulaku's Public Relations Strategy in building Brand Awareness are by conducting in-depth interviews, along with collecting secondary data. Then the method used is descriptive qualitative method. One of the Marketing Public Relations strategies carried out is for the public to recognise Akulaku by setting marketing objectives, selecting PR messages and means, implementing plans and evaluating results through 7 tools from MPR. Some MPR tools used by Akulaku companies are Publications, Events, Sponsorships, Public Service Activities and Media Identity.

The strategy is carried out by the Akulaku Company, but not all visible tools have been carried out. Such as News and Speeches because many people missed the news about akulaku in the mass media due to lack of news coverage of akulaku and lack of press conferences (speeches) so that not many media were invited to cover which resulted in a lack of awareness from the public Public Relations Strategy. Relations strategy that One of them is to stay up to date, for example by developing Akulaku, which was previously Akulaku was only an online lending platform, but now it has already developed and very well known in the Among the people, namely E-Commerce where Akulaku opens a stall for merchants to cooperate in selling their goods in Akulaku which is combined with the previous system, namely online credit without a card and only using a KTP.

An equally important strategy is to keep creating content that is related and certainly attracts the attention of Akulaku users through interesting content on Akulaku's social media. And also try to always be honest so that it can continue to be trusted by Akulaku users. For example, if they review the instalment of a product then, the nominal installment that is promoted in accordance with what is received by its users when they want to install goods from Akulaku. And of course the products reviewed from merchants are products that are in accordance with what is stated. Quoting from Michael L. Ray Belch (2010) who says that promotion is the coordination of all marketers' efforts initiated to regulate information and persuasion channels to sell goods and services or promote ideas.

According to Shimp (2010), brand awareness is the ability of a brand to immediately appear in the minds of consumers when they are thinking about a particular product category with this can also be referred to as Top of Mind. According to the results of interviews and data obtained from trusted sources, community awareness of the the existence of Akulaku can be said to be successful. Many people finally know Akulaku by downloading the Akulaku application and it can also be seen from the increasing number of product instalments for the category of expensive goods, which range in price to millions. whose price range reaches millions. Of course it is proof that Akulaku has a good existence in the eyes of the community.

Based on the results of interviews with Akulaku's internal parties, public awareness of Akulaku can be said to be well established. This can be said from the many requests for Akulaku to stock and open more merhants in selling goods that are widely consumed such as vapes, smartwatches, etc. with a greater number of choices and price variations and increase Akulaku's promotional activities both online and offline. This is because when compared to other applications, Akulaku is still very minimal for its promotion in the field of E-Commerce. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2010), promotion is an activity to convey product advantages and persuade target consumers to buy products immediately.

In this study, researchers conducted interviews with several people who would be used as competent sources. Where the provide reliable, relevant, accurate information and can answer the questions needed in this qualitative descriptive research. The people who will be interviewed are internal and external sources who are considered appropriate in helping this research, namely as follows:

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Table 1 Akulaku interviewees and communication experts

No.	Name of Interviewee	Interviewee Profile	Reason
1	Niyama	Akulaku <i>Business Development</i> Team	Researchers choose the manager of Business Development of Akulaku E-Commerce company because he is a person who knows about the company's strategy to build brand awareness.
2	Veronica	<i>Customer Relations</i>	The researcher choose the Customer Relations of the E- company Commerce Akulaku for being involved in creating a public relations strategy in building brand awareness.
3	Vio	Akulaku App Users	Researchers choose Akulaku application users. users are people who can experience the Akulaku application firsthand.
4	Okky Alparessi	Marketing Expert	The researcher choose Mr Okky Alparessi as a source of research to be interviewed about Marketing.

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5	Heri Rakhmadi	Public Relations Expert	The researcher made Mr Heri Rakhmadi because he is a PR practitioner who understands the world of public relations.
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In this case, it has been confirmed that Akulaku has expanded products to influence and attract audiences through various kinds of mass media, namely offline and online. In this case, Akulaku has conducted offline promotions through social media or billboards.

"...Akulaku is currently promoting on social media on Instagram (quizzes with prizes and also giveaways) as well as making videos on utube with content on how to apply for a limit, use limits and other benefits so as to build brand positioning..."

In offline promotion with billboards, the following are the results of research in the form of photographic evidence obtained:

### Image 2. Akulaku Billboard Publication



Source: Kumparan.com

Akulaku Company draws attention to new products or company activities by holding events. This was also confirmed by Niyama as the manager of Akulaku's Business Development division:

"...there was an event during Ramadan 2019 held at the Senayan City mall for 5 days, the event had games, fashion shows, and makeup demos. yes from the event many users came to visit from those who did not know Akulaku became aware and those who were not familiar with the application and credit applications could be helped by the relevant team at the event..."

Akulaku markets goods through sponsorship of an event. According to the results of research and publications in online media, Akulaku has sponsored one offline event in the form of a Ramadan event, namely holding a collaboration with the Indonesian National Amil Zakat Agency (Baznas RI) by providing sacrificial animals to all corners of Indonesia. following is evidence of the results of the researcher's research from the sponsorship of the event

### Image 3. Akulaku Sponsorship Publication



Source: Baznas.com



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The task of Public Relations is to create events that are in accordance with the characteristics of the company, products and the creation of news media, one example is press releases. However, from the results of the research, researchers did not find answers from Akulaku Public Relations or from the Business Development division in conducting Press Releases or Press Conferences. Akulaku held a briefing meeting that aims to talk about sales to be able to build a company image. One example is by holding a meeting with several client media partners. This was confirmed by Vero

"...more talk about the facts and data in the field, which active Akulaku credit users are 3 million users, how many downloads and also explain about Akulaku's mid-low target as well. Akulaku is already in 4 countries Indonesia Philippines Malaysia and Vietnam..."

But according to Vero, there are many obstacles in introducing the company name to the media

"...The obstacle is more to invite a meeting to match the time with the client if they have met and explained that they are generally interested because if I always talk about the existing data so that it is clear and trusted, the next obstacle is to establish a good relationship with the client, the obstacle is in promoting it to the public, how do they want to download and use Akulaku because there are so many ecommerce out there but Akulaku is more recognised as an online loan than ecommerce so it must be more intensively promoted akulaku promotional media if only YouTube and billboards are very minimal to reach the public so the obstacle must be a lot more advertising ..."

According to the explanation above, it can be concluded that the Akulaku company needs more and more intensive promotion so that the company has a greater capacity to reach its community. Akulaku has conducted public service activities including CSR by providing health services, compensation and Quran in schools. According to the results obtained from publications on Akulaku's social media, here is evidence of these publications.

### Image 4. Akulaku CSR Publication with Sekolah Kami 2024



Source: [vakansiinfo.com](http://vakansiinfo.com)

Akulaku E-Commerce Company has created an identity that can be recognised by the public through the company logo, which reads AL. While PR practitioners reach their target public through mass media, namely by creating various kinds of interesting content online and offline. This is agreed by Vero, that Akulaku also does content on various Akulaku online platforms:

"...Akulaku is currently promoting on social media on Instagram (quizzes with prizes and giveaways) and also making videos on YouTube with content on how to apply for limits, use limits and other benefits so as to build brand positioning and every time I meet the average person already knows AL because they have shopped once or twice so it's not really newborn for akulaku in the eyes of the public. so far hahaha..."

### A. Marketing Public Relations Strategy

Based on the results of interviews with Niyama as Manager of Business Development and who also controls all Government Relations and Marketing activities carried out by Akulaku. The role of Public Relations carried out by Akulaku is like in terms of Formative Research. In the initial step, Akulaku carried out a strategic planning process to raise public awareness about the existence of the Akulaku application.

"...Akulaku reads the demand from the market, where the average Akulaku target market is the C & D segment (lower middle class) besides that the Market Place is really loved by the Indonesian people, and Akulaku sees the potential of the C & D market

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to shop using the loans they have at Akulaku... C & D market to shop using the loans they have at Akulaku..." (Niyama Rachel, primary data interview, 11 May 2020)

This was also further explained by Vero, as merchants relations in Business Development Akulaku:

"...internal Ceo william li saw that E-commerce in Indonesia was very developed such as tokopedia and shopee so at the beginning of its launch e-commerce only sold electronic products and gadgets whose total amount was large and was responded positively by customers even though at the beginning nobody knew that akulaku had e-commerce but when they downloaded AL they immediately saw that the limit was large even the limit could be spent. Within a few months AL saw a good response from customers so it began to expand, starting to sell fashion baby products and electronic pulses until now more and more merchants are registering in AL..."

This proves that Akulaku analyses the situation that occurs around it. Akulaku sees the potential of the C & D market to shop using the loans they have at Akulaku. With the situation that occurred, William Li as a CEO established a new application, namely Akulaku e-commerce using a credit system. This can be categorised into the first step in analysing a situation. Analyzing Akulaku e-commerce company through SWOT analysis. Analysis to find Akulaku's strengths and weaknesses because it can be the main focus in the strategic planning process that will be carried out. Akulaku is the largest online financial virtual credit application company in the Southeast Asian market. Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, and the Philippines. According to Vero, Akulaku has SWOT

"...strengths- can do instalments, easy limit application, large limit from competitors Weakness - because the application is easy, it is not enough to filter the customers who are listed in akulaku, we don't know the customer's ability to pay (but if they don't pay, they are usually visited by outsourcers to their homes).

opportunity - seeing this opportunity for a good response from the public, Akulaku opened an e-commerce based on instalments as well which competitors do not have and for now only AL dares to provide the highest limit threat - in terms of e-commerce, the threat is that because it can be paid in instalments, many merchants take advantage of the moment to markup the price quite high so that when compared, the price in Akulaku is slightly more expensive, so this affects sales traffic..."

In this case Vero mentioned that Akulaku has strengths in the field of credit and a large limit compared to other competitors as an application that uses the P2P Landing system. But Akulaku also has weaknesses as expressed by Niyama in terms of promotion to the public:

"...Strength: Akulaku has no competitors in Indonesia with a similar business model. Weakness: Akulaku still uses the old method where it uses offline methods for marketing and is not maximised in its online methods.

Opportunity: Akulaku is the only platform that provides Marketplace and also Loans and can expand the market target.

Threat: Akulaku will suffer setbacks if it does not maximise online methods..."

The weakness of Akulaku as evidenced above is the lack of incessant promotion carried out online, more often offline. In fact, Akulaku itself has high competitiveness that can compete with other platforms. This is important to be considered by the Akulaku team to be more vigorous in promoting Akulaku through predetermined strategies and changing its old methods because it will have a dangerous impact on Akulaku's own competitiveness. This can be categorised as part of analysing an organisation's strengths and weaknesses.

The last Formative Research step is to analyse the public or people in an organisation or company. Akulaku makes an introduction to the public. Both internal publics (employees, employee families, management, and investors) and external publics (media, government, consumers, communities and NGOs). Like creates YouTube content and photos posted on Instagram so that the public as well as employees can see and be aware of the events held by Akulaku, also many employees are included in creating content on social media. Akulaku itself analyses target market data in the surrounding C & D classes as a company that adheres to the p2p landing system. As said by Vero:

"...of course as a P2P landing must be registered OJK in order to build trust. Then for e-commerce AL screened the database of existing and new customers on a scale and AL saw a good response from cust such as the ability of cust to pay in instalments. Based on this, William Li as CEO is confident that if AL adds e-commerce, it will provide benefits as well as attract new customers to download..."

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Based on the e-presentation given by Akulaku as an E-Commerce, Akulaku said that it wants to provide shopping convenience to everyone by means of instalments/credit so that it can adjust to the needs of the community where the target market is C & D in accordance with the target installment users in Indonesia. And that's where Akulaku can maintain its goals as said by Vero:

"...the beginning of akulaku release did a lot of promotion on utube ads in order to brand awareness of Akulaku itself after the second year, many began to download and apply for loans because it was in that year there were still not many competitors with existing customers Akulaku tried to always upgrade in terms of applying for loans that are easier than competitors, only using ID cards and ID card selfies in 1x24 hours can get a limit then with a much longer installment period compared to competitors, namely instalments can be up to 12 months, and the large limit promised by Akulaku competitors until now no one has dared to be that big I forgot the credivo dlu new regis around 700 don't know how much it is. With this system, it has made Akulaku survive until now..."

The thing that makes Akulaku able to maintain its goals is that Akulaku only uses ID cards and ID card selfies in 1x24 hours to get a limit. Then with a much longer period of instalments compared to competitors, namely instalments that can be up to 12 months, and the large limit promised.

Based on Niyama's explanation, that Akulaku conducts offline promotions using billboards and banners which will contain events that will be made by Akulaku so that many audiences will come.

"...Akulaku mostly does offline marketing such as billboards and banners..."

This indicates that Akulaku is more active in offline advertising. However, according to the response of a marketing expert Mr Okky about this is that it is not enough to use only offline but online social media must also be strong.

"...Akulaku doesn't seem to have any activities on social media, okay if offline you need to make below and above the line it's important for a brand to meet directly, offline advertising, other conventional advertising. But both have to be equally strong...if social media can be wider..."

Akulaku communicates strategies that will be carried out such as creating events to the public and from these events, Akulaku will provide knowledge about Akulaku to the audience as well as promotional offers so that communication becomes more effective when creating events and getting customers. This is also confirmed by Niyama,

"...Akulaku once made an offline event where people were given knowledge about Akulaku and during the event Akulaku gained new users:

1. Must socialise what Akulaku products are like, and make sure the target market understands Akulaku well (explanation/tutorial video)
2. Inform users of practical and easy-to-understand application methods and T&Cs in place.
3. Conduct surveys about Akulaku as a whole, products that are sold and criticism and suggestions (can be done on all media platforms that are packaged with questions and answers and others) ...and others) ..."

"...It's not a strong strategy yet because in a big event like that, the coverage is not wide enough, so they have to be stronger in social activation. Maybe they can make certain brand ambassadors like Shopee who uses Blackpink and Tokopedia who uses BTS as their Brand Ambassador..."

This was agreed by Public Relations expert, Pak Heri.

"...in today's digital era to reach certain markets such as C or D must use media mix, and here Akulaku only uses online events." But according to the team from Akulaku itself, Akulaku has used online and offline media as communication tactics. According to Ka Niyama, Akulaku uses social media and offline media such as billboards

"...Akulaku promotes on social media such as Youtube, Instagram and Facebook there are games and also giveaways on Instagram..."

Niyama's statement was also confirmed by Vero, who is also a team from Akulaku.

"...Akulaku is currently promoting on social media on Instagram (quizzes with prizes and giveaways) as well as making videos on YouTube with content on how to apply for a limit. limit , using limits and other benefits so as to build brand positioning and



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every time I meet the average person knows AL because they have shopped once or twice so it's not really newborn so akulaku in the eyes of the public so far hahahha..."

However, according to Mr Okky, Akulaku does not guarantee that more people will come if it only applies promotions and content on social media.

"...by just giving discounts, instalments does not guarantee that people will come to Akulaku e-commerce because Tokopedia also gives paylater, all of them give that with all kinds of promotions. If people are not aware of the brand, no matter how rich the discount is, people will not be interested because people..."

According to Mr Okky, this is what Akulaku's Public Relations should do.

"...Akulaku might be able to make a benchmark, maybe they have made this before and they also have to position themselves with who they want to be positioned with, whether it is the same as shopee, lazada, each of which has different characteristics. If Akulaku wants to be positioned like Tokopedia then in terms of features, in terms of advertising, BA, everything must be almost similar to Tokopedia like Shopee and Tokopedia..."

This was also agreed by Mr Heri

"...If they have enough finances they can actually use advertising in collaboration with other online media. Akulaku can also use brand ambassadors such as Tokopedia and Shopee which are maximally utilised in promotions through events, advertisements and so on..."

The statements from these communication experts indicate that Akulaku does not yet have the image and characteristics that he wants the public to see what he is like when compared to other e-commerce companies that already have their own image in the eyes of the public. Because this greatly affects competition between e-commerce companies, so it must be more precise which target market you want to reach.

In implementing the planned strategy to increase public awareness of Akulaku, Akulaku has a structured plan. According to Vio, who is one of Akulaku's service users, said that Akulaku always conducts events every year. The event is held at the mall every year by inviting famous guest stars as performers at the closing. The last event that Akulaku did was the Ramadan event which is always held in a big mall every year.

"...They haven't implemented a strong strategy because in big events like that, because again, the coverage is only in the mall, so they have to be even stronger in social activation..."

From the results of the evaluation of each team that participated in making strategies for Brand Awareness, there are many things that Akulaku must do in order to get more customers and merchants to be interested in Akulaku's work system. As confirmed by Niyama.

"...Marketing that is less pushed and not yet comprehensive, applications that are quite behind compared to other platforms, features / campaigns in it are also less varied..."

This response was also agreed by Mr Okky about the lack of image about Akulaku.

"...The PR is really lacking, the marketing is also really lacking. I know Akulaku but I've never seen any content on social media or viral content on social media..."

"...if I look at the logo, it's not very attractive. If you want to give a discount, if people are not familiar with the app, it won't last..."

In terms of making strategies to get the attention of the public, Akulaku is still less aggressive in its promotion through YouTube or other social media. It can be seen from the number of subscribers that are still lacking and followers that are not as many as other E-Commerce platforms.

### **Strengths and Weaknesses of Akulaku's Marketing Public Relations Strategy according to Interviewees**

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Publication, Akulaku has published on social media, Publications that are carried out are not many and in a namely Instagram and billboards which are also few media and are not comprehensive. Akulaku does not publish on television like other e-commerce promotional materials. competitors.

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Events, Akulaku draws attention to the company's The event conducted by Akulaku is only carried out in products or activities at large events such as at large malls and only a few malls and is carried out only once a year where it is not a guarantee that Senayan City Mall. Akulaku can get the public as a whole in accordance with the desired target.

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Sponsorships, Akulaku has marketed goods through Akulaku's sponsorship is not intensive when compared sponsorships in events attended by several to other e-commerce which sponsors many events artists including live events on tv.

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News In this study, researchers did not find the answer that Akulaku Public Relations conducted Press Releases and Press Conferences because the division has been very difficult to contact since the pandemic entered Indonesia.

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Speeches, Akulaku held many sales association There are many obstacles in conducting associations briefings or meetings aimed at talking about because of the incessant promotion carried out by company's sales that can build the company's image. Akulaku which only uses promotional media such as Youtube and Billboards so that not many people and media partners are aware of Akulaku's own e-commerce.

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Public Service Activities, Akulaku has carried out Public services carried out by Akulaku are not many public service activities including CSR which is and the publications carried out are also lacking and published through social media social assistance that should an opportunity for Akulaku to be carried out is not even vigorous.

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Identity Media, Akulaku has created an identity that For media identity, Akulaku uses the company logo as can be recognised by the public through a company its identity but there is no background or message that logo with AL written on it that is easy for the public makes Akulaku create a logo like that. to understand.

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**Source: Researcher Processed Data (2024)**

**B. Discussion of Brand Awareness**

The purpose of the strategy that has been carried out by Akulaku is to build Brand Awareness from the public. Brand awareness requires a continuous range of uncertain feelings that certain brands have been known before, so that consumers believe that the product is the only brand in a product group (Durianto et al, 2010). Akulaku has been recognised by the wider community and even the number of visitors and collaborating merchants is increasing every year. However, it must still have an effective public relations strategy in order to maintain its quality and existence to continue to make Akulaku a top of mind e-commerce application. And also so that Akulaku is still considered a trusted media and is always a mainstay for people to credit goods in online applications. Therefore, the things that need to be done are approaches using social media, events, offline promotions, and others.

In addition to this, events, social media, YouTube content is very important to feature internal Akulaku people. Because Akulaku employees are ordinary people who are very relate to the community and they can invite their respective relations to see their videos so that many will be more interested when they see their friends on the social media. From this explanation, it can be concluded that Akulaku conducts promotional activities through social media as well as through offline promotions. Akulaku also holds events where the event is published on Akulaku's own social media.

**C. The obstacles that Akulaku went through**

In carrying out its activities, every team must experience obstacles. It can be said that one of the obstacles is promotion. Promotion for Akulaku to the public is not as intensive as other online platforms because most people only know Akulaku as an online savings and loan application when compared to its e-commer. This was confirmed by Vero

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"...if I meet them and explain to them, they are mostly interested because I always talk about the data so that it is clear and reliable. The next obstacle is to build a good relationship with the client. The obstacle is in promoting to the public, how do they want to download and use Akulaku because there are a lot of e-commerce out there but Akulaku is better known as an online loan than E-Commerce. That's why we have to promote more intensively. Akulaku promotional media only YouTube and billboards are very minimal to reach the public so the obstacle must be a lot of advertising again..."

This was also agreed by Mr Okky regarding Akulaku's awareness strategy.

"...if you look at Akulaku's awareness, it is very lacking. If I think it could be that when installing the fish, the target is not suitable and the budget is not big so it is covered by other brands..."

This is reinforced by the response of one of the interviewees who uses the Akulaku application named Vio that he often uses Akulaku as a loan application rather than buying goods in his E-Commerce. Many publics still do not recognise the awareness of Akulaku. This was responded to by Pak Heri

"...He has to change his media communication strategy. Their branding strategy. Maybe it's not on a big scale that maybe only in a few malls and not all over..."

From the above statement it can be concluded that there are obstacles in building brand awareness in every activity, both from promotions and establishing good relationships with clients which are certainly an important key to establishing cooperation with Akulaku, as well as Public Relations strategies that from the beginning have not been well described in the field so that whatever promotions and events are held if the scale of promotion is only a little, then only some of the public are also aware of Akulaku.

### **V. CONCLUSION**

Based on the research results of the analysis that has been carried out, several conclusions can be drawn that Akulaku is an online buying and selling application whose Internet-based business model meets the needs of loans between financial intermediaries (p2p Lending). So Akulaku is an online E-Commerce platform that sells various kinds of household needs online and is one of the online selling platforms that uses a virtual credit system where customers can sell goods in instalments.

Akulaku's strength lies in their marketing by conducting offline activities including using banners, billboards, etc., so that there are still people who are aware of the existence of Akulaku through advertisements posted on large roads containing taglines in the form of promotions instalments and large limits that can include many customers to download applications and come to events that will be held.

The obstacles or obstacles faced by Akulaku in building brand awareness to the public are the absence of positioning made by Akulaku for their public to see, where more people should have been aware of Akulaku E-Commerce but not widely covered because of the absence of characteristics shown by Akulaku. Most people know more about Akulaku through online loans and virtual credit than E-Commerce.

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