

PUBLIC RELATION AND THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA: A CASE OF FACEBOOK.

Mr. Tanachart Natee & Mr. Apisit Rattanastranurak
Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Bangkok, Thailand
*E-mail: *tanachart.na@ssru.ac.th, apisit.ra @ssru.ac.th*

ABSTRACT

Public Relations for enhancing the better university's image is essential to the modern success of the university in Thailand. The use of social media, especially Facebook, is considered as one of the most effective public relation tools as well as the lowest costs. Satisfaction of the everyday campus news is a vital measurement of the extent to which the university image sufficiently meets the customers' expectation. In order to answer the real research problem, many opinions and feedbacks from the main subscribers of campus Facebook play an important role. The objectives of this study were to examine the main subscribers of public relation news from campus Facebook about their feedback and to sum up their suggestions to improve the campus news services. By utilizing a quantitative research technique, a total of 150 main subscribers from various departments of university at the summer of the year 2019 was subjected to an interviewed. A Likert-five-scales interview was designed and conducted to gain more in-sight information from three groups: students, staff, and faculty.

The findings from the respondents unveiled that they were very satisfied with campus public relation news offered by the staff of the university. Overall, the campus news had met their expectation. However, there were some suggestions from their feedback that can help to enhance the better university's image. There are five suggestions from this study. First is to offer more positive attitude and behavior of university stakeholders. Second is to have a real time campus news. Third is to improve the accuracy of the language of news contents. Fourth is to improve the quality of news pictures. Finally, the focus should not on only the top management of the university, but also the students and faculty members.

Keyword: Facebook, Subscribers, Image, Campus News

INTRODUCTION

Public relations is becoming more and more important to the image setting of the university in Thailand. Different university may have different image such as research based university, teaching and learning university, activity for community based university, and so forth. The image for university nowadays may have many subtle dimensions, for example, one university may have both image as a research based university together with green environment university, or high quality of teaching and learning university. Many positive image can insinuate the favorable positive public opinion and gain more enrollment as well as high budget of subsidizing from the government. Therefore, the job of public relation manager is now increasingly significant to help develop a positive image for the campus. They are required to create and maintain a favorable positive public image for the campus. They need to craft media release as well as news on the social media releasing regularly to share public perception of the university to increase more awareness of its work, achievement, and goals. Public relation is growing in its significant and it is a growing field

in terms of social media as well as media exposure. In fact, nowadays most universities use both advertising and public relations to enhance the recognitions of brand name and communicate with target audiences and stakeholders. However, the most basic different between advertising and public relation is that advertising is paid. While public relation is a result of disseminate the information in form of press release and news in social media.

Effective social media using as public relations is major considerations in developing the positive image for the university and the fact that every staff, and faculty members can be helpful by sharing the public relations news every day. Making effective public relation news as requirements for staff and faculty members to enhance their every good news is very important for the university to improve the proper setting image as well as to improve stakeholders' confidence and trustworthiness. Therefore, the public relation and the use of social media is the focus of this study, the area of this study and scope of the study were based on the case study of Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University.

METHODOLOGY

This study aimed to understand the public relations and the use of social media from the student's, staff's and faculty member's perspective. Public Relations is indispensable to the enhancing the better university's image which certainly is vital to the modern success of the university in Thailand. In fact, the use of modern social media, especially Facebook, is considered effective in terms of speed and low cost. It is often known as one of the most effective public relation tools. Satisfaction of the everyday campus news is a significant measurement of the effectiveness and the extent to which the university image sufficiently meets the customers' expectation or not. In order to answer the research objectives, the vast information of opinions and feedbacks from the main subscribers of campus Facebook play a critical ingredient of success. The objectives of this study were to investigate the main subscribers of public relation news from campus Facebook about their insight, opinion, and feedback which in turn to sum up their suggestions to improve the campus news services. By employing a quantitative research technique, a total of 150 main subscribers from various offices in many departments of university at the summer of the year 2019 was randomly chosen for interview. A five points Likert interview was designed. The interview questionnaire was used as the data collection to gain more in-sight information from three sample which were students, staff, and faculty.

FINDINGS

The answers obtained from quantitative research can be reported as the following. The findings from the survey of respondents revealed that they were happy with campus public relation. In other words, they were very satisfied with campus public relation news offered by the staff of the university. Overall, the campus news and its public relation activities had met their expectation and did a good work. However, there were some suggestions from their responses and direct feedback that were indispensable to enhance the quality of the public relations and the better university's image. There are five suggestions from this study. First is to offer more positive attitude and behavior of university stakeholders. Second is to have a real time campus news. Third is to improve the accuracy of the language of news contents. Fourth is to improve the quality of news pictures. Finally, the focus should not on only the top management of the university, but also the students and faculty members.

Moreover, the results of this survey can also be reported that the majority of respondents pointed out that the survey process may be needed to be updated and should not

focused only on the level of satisfaction but also the reasons for their high or low satisfaction. On the other hand, modern social media and its viral impacts were the strength of modern campus public relation. The researchers agreed that it is necessary for the team of researchers to consider the real reengineering process of assessment to achieve better survey results. Important suggestions from the focus groups also included it was important to emphasize that the survey for feedback should be viewed as an important real investment of human resources of the university. The topics of survey should focus on what employees' need to enhance their knowledge and skills together with the aims to improve university image.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Institution of Research and Development, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University for their financial support. The big thanks also go to the respondents of this survey for their time and their kind sharing of knowledge, experience, and comments. Also, my appreciation goes to Asst. Prof. Dr. Kevin Wongleedee, Director of Institute of Lifelong Learning Promotion and Creativity, for his proof reading of this manuscript.

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