

**A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF CORPORATE ONLINE
COMMUNICATION: A MARKETING PUBLIC
RELATIONS (MPR) PERSPECTIVE**

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PERSPECTIVE**

by

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SUMMARY

This study identifies, tests and modifies factors for effective corporate online communication using a marketing public relations (MPR) perspective. An MPR perspective entails an integrated cross-disciplinary approach with a strong product and/or service focus. The need for the study is underscored by the fact that there is undoubtedly a lack of a theoretical framework in which to practise corporate online communication in the context of selling the organisation's products or services.

In order to test the identified factors for effective corporate online communication, namely credibility, trust and long-term relationships, this study uses Q methodology as a research method and applies Q sorting as a means of data collection. Participants are asked to sort statements about corporate online communication in their preferred order of importance on a large board in the presence of the researcher. This is known as the Q sorting process. The identified factors are tested among 20 communicators and 20 receivers of corporate online communication. The participants' sortings of statements are compared by means of Q factor analysis and then analysed.

The results of the study indicate that only one factor is perceived as an absolute significant factor for effective corporate online communication and that two of the factors necessitate modification. Consequently, based on the results, four factors are identified for effective corporate online communication, using an MPR perspective. These four factors are derived from the perspectives of both the communicators and receivers of corporate online communication and are included in a proposed theoretical framework of corporate online communication using an MPR perspective.

KEYWORDS

Corporate online communication

Corporate website

Credibility

Factor

Factor analysis

Internet

Long-term relationships

Marketing public relations (MPR)

Marketing communications

Organisational communication

Q methodology

Trust

World Wide Web

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