



## Industry Event Organizer Branding Strategy in Increasing Consumer Loyalty

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### Abstract

*In the era of globalization and increasingly fierce business competition, branding strategy has become one of the key factors that determine the success of a company. CV. Solusi Sahabat Sejati (Sahabat Explorer Event Organizer) realizes the importance of branding in creating consumer trust and loyalty. Friends of Explore facilitate activities for educational, recreational and entertainment purposes. And committed to his field, he consistently continues to improve services, both modules and program choices, in order to meet the needs and expectations of partners who have loyally used Sahabat Explorer's services. This study uses a qualitative method. suggests that qualitative methodology is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior. Based on the research results above, the branding strategy for Sahabat Explorer which aims to increase consumer loyalty can involve several things: Understanding the Target Audience: with a strong understanding of who they serve, Sahabat Explorer can direct their branding efforts more effectively. Strengthening emotional connections with consumers through these values can help build stronger bonds. Consistent Brand Experience: Consistency is key in branding strategy. Explorer Friends must ensure that every touchpoint with the brand, from social media to physical products and customer service, consistently reflects their brand values and identity. By combining these strategies, Sahabat Explorer can strengthen their brand identity, deepen relationships with consumers, and increase overall consumer loyalty levels. With a holistic and consistent approach, Sahabat Explorer can build a strong and sustainable brand in the long term.*

## Introduction

EO is a company that operates in the field of providing professional services. This company is the organizer or success team of an event that will be held by the event owner (client). Basically, an EO has the task of helping the client to organize the desired event. Examples include product launching, company gatherings, anniversaries, exhibitions, seminars, promotions, product selling and so on. Apart from that, EO also plays a role in private events such as weddings, birthday parties and other private events. The EO's job is to organize all event needs from the preparation stage until the event runs smoothly and well (Nugroho & Meilia, 2022).

Using EO services can also be adjusted to the needs of the event, for example requiring an EO as a funder or contributor of funds for a particular event that requires a lot of funds to maintain the event (Eddyono, 2021; Purwadi et al., 2020). This is usually referred to as a sponsor team or a team that collaborates between the organizing committee of an event, with donors or other forms of assistance.

There is no doubt about the development of the EO industry in Indonesia, this is marked by the large number of EO companies circulating in all regions to big cities in Indonesia, especially the city of Makassar which is one of the cities that has so many companies operating in the field of EO's services (Mujahid et al., 2022).

Event organizer (EO) is a business in the service sector that is officially appointed by the Client to organize a series of events, starting from the concept creation process, planning, preparation, execution until the series of events is completed in order to help the client realize the expected goals through the series of events held (Setyawan, 2009; Prabowo, 2021). In a business era full of increasingly fierce competition, branding strategy is an important element in differentiating yourself and winning the hearts of consumers (Keller & Kotler, 2022). Branding must be used to form a good perception in the minds of the public so that it sticks for a long time. As mentioned, branding can be used to create a brand image of a product in the minds of consumers (Arifudin et al., 2023). Wibowo (2014) so that consumers are expected to consume it.

According to Lestari (2021) divides events based on their type, namely: Mega event An event that is very large and capable of having a big impact on the surrounding community or the host country. Events that fall into this very large category are the Olympics and the World Cup. Hallmark event This event is synonymous with the character or ethos of a region. Examples of these events are the Rio Carnival and the Tour de France (Allen et al., 2022). This event has its own meaning for the host cities. Major event: An event whose size can attract the media to cover it, attracts a large number of visitors to attend the event and is able to have a significant economic impact (Salgado-Barandela et al., 2021; Frost & Frost, 2020). An example of this event is the Us Open grand slam tennis match. Cultural events Events that are held to showcase a particular culture and can be held outside the area where the culture is located. An example of this event is the Indonesian cultural festival in Japan (Ocón, 2021). Business events This event consists of activities carried out by companies or agencies. The main characteristic of this event is an increase in income for the company or region. One type of business event is an exhibition (Vaníčková & Szczepańska-Woszczyzna, 2020). Exhibitions are events that bring together product and service providers and buyers in one place.

In today's business world, competition between companies which affects almost all Indonesian society cannot be separated. Each company is competing to show the advantages of each product, both in the service sector, retail and non-retail product sales. Every company relies heavily on marketing communications for the development process. Print and electronic media are very commonly used in marketing communications (Juska, 2021). Apart from that, several business people are familiar with new media (cyber media) because they are considered more effective, the information to be conveyed is more general in nature, and the distribution of information is more even across all levels of society.

Event Organizer is a company that specializes in providing professional services. More specifically, this company is responsible for organizing events that will be hosted by the event owner (client) (Venske, 2021). Product launches, fashion shows, exhibitions, product sales, seminars and other similar events are examples. In essence, the Event Organizer is tasked with managing all event needs, from the preparation stage to the closing of the event. The goal of an event organizer is to help a business achieve its goals, specifically to increase profits.

Event Organizer is a relatively new type of job. Following the financial crisis of 1997, the Indonesian economy and the rise of showbiz coincided with the expansion of the Event Organizer industry. Since the introduction of expos for the purpose of showcasing products, many businesses have set up special departments to manage every activity of the company. However, since the beginning of the economic crisis in 1990 until the beginning of 2000, this

division only carried out its responsibilities at certain times, so the company closed this division. Instead, companies employ external activity organizers to manage company activities (Szydło et al., 2022).

In the era of globalization and increasingly fierce business competition, branding strategy has become one of the key factors that determine the success of a company (Gupta et al., 2020). CV. Solusi Sahabat Sejati (Sahabat Explorer Event Organizer) realizes the importance of branding in creating consumer trust and loyalty. Friends of Explore facilitate activities for educational, recreational and entertainment purposes. Has experience in carrying out outdoor based management training activities since 2019 with various training program designs that can be supported by professional and committed staff in their fields who consistently continue to improve services, both modules and program choices, to meet the needs and expectations of partners who have loyally used them. Friends of Explore services.

Sahabat Explorer Event Organizer has been operating in the event planning and organizing industry for several years. This company has succeeded in building an image as a professional service provider that delivers high quality and satisfying events. However, in the face of increasingly fierce competition, CV. Solusi Sahabat Sejati realizes the importance of increasing consumer loyalty in order to maintain existing market share and develop long-term relationships with customers. CV. Solusi Sahabat Sejati, with the Sahabat Explorer Event Organizer brand, is no exception in facing this challenge. In an effort to increase consumer loyalty, CV. Solusi Sahabat Sejati needs to consider an effective branding strategy to strengthen its position in the market.

This company needs to understand how the right branding strategy can make a real contribution in strengthening consumer loyalty. By understanding this, CV. Solusi Sahabat Sejati can develop more effective strategies to build long-term relationships with customers, increase customer satisfaction, and generate sustainable profits. First of all, Sahabat Explorer Event Organizer has become a trusted partner in organizing various events and activities. However, despite having built a good reputation, they need to take further steps in strengthening their brand image in the eyes of consumers. In this case, the right branding strategy can help increase consumers' positive perceptions of the company and create stronger trust. Apart from that, a good branding strategy can also help Friends of Explorer Event Organizer differentiate themselves from competitors. In the competitive event hosting industry, it is important for companies to stand out and attract the attention of potential consumers. By developing a unique and differentiating brand identity, Sahabat Explorer Event Organizer can attract relevant market segments and build greater brand awareness.

Furthermore, consumer loyalty is an important factor in the long-term success of a company. By increasing consumer loyalty, Friends of Explorer Event Organizer can build long-term relationships with customers and reduce the churn rate or consumer turnover. Through an effective branding strategy, companies can create emotional connections with consumers, increase their loyalty, and encourage them to choose Sahabat Explorer Event Organizer again as their event organizing partner. Consumer loyalty is a reliable measure for producing sales growth and customer loyalty can be defined based on consistent purchases (Dawes et al., 2021). The following are the characteristics of consumer loyalty: Making repeat purchases regularly. Consumers make continuous purchases of a particular product. Purchase across product or service lines. Consumers not only buy main services and products but consumers also buy product lines and services from the same company. 3. Referring other people. Where consumers communicate by word of mouth regarding the product. 4. Demonstrates immunity to the pull of competitors (demonstrates an immunity to the full extent of the competition).

Consumers refuse to use alternative products or services offered by competitors. Loyal customers are an asset for the company, this can be seen based on their characteristics. Therefore, consumer loyalty is a measure that can be relied upon to predict the growth of a company's data.

## Methods

In this research, researchers play a direct role in processing the data received. Through interviews, where researchers conduct interviews with parties concerned with business communication planning. Researchers directly made observations related to activities carried out to support the collaboration with CV. Solusi Sahabat Sejati, as well as through documentation taken directly, as well as other documentation regarding activities that have been carried out to strengthen the required data. This implementation was fully known and carried out by the informant. In this research, researchers play a direct role in processing the data received. Through interviews, where researchers conduct interviews with parties concerned with business communication planning. Researchers directly made observations related to activities carried out to support the collaboration with CV. Solusi Sahabat Sejati, as well as through documentation taken directly, as well as other documentation regarding activities that have been carried out to strengthen the required data. This implementation was fully known and carried out by the informant. 3.3 Research Location CV. True Friends Solutions located, Komp. Beverly Hills Block D17 Antang Raya, Makassar. In this research, the author used data triangulation techniques to check the validity of the data. Triangulation is a data validity checking technique that utilizes something else.

## Result and Discussion

### Branding Strategy Planning

An effective branding strategy can contribute to increasing consumer loyalty. Some commonly used branding strategies include identifying the right target market, developing a consistent brand identity, effective brand communication, good brand management, and building close relationships between the brand and consumers. Identifying the right target market allows companies to understand consumer needs and preferences, so they can develop relevant branding strategies. Developing a consistent brand identity helps companies to build a strong image and reputation in the eyes of consumers. Effective brand communication through various channels can increase brand awareness and generate positive interactions with consumers.

Based on the results of interviews conducted by researchers with informants regarding how to get to know/know CV Sahabat Explore, partners from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry said that:

*"I found out about the Friends of the Explorer Event Organizer from office friends, who happened to have used the WO's services."*

Then the researcher asked how long they had been using Sahabat Explore with the informant saying that:

*"I have been using Sahabat Explore's services since 2021 and until now our company still uses Sahabat Explore"*

Next, what made you choose Sahabat Explorer Event Organizer over other competitors?

*"Explorer Event Organizer friends always have new things to do in building character and have creativity in designing activities that have positive value for the agency"*

Then, apart from interviews with the informants above, the researcher also conducted interviews with the Makassar Regional PPSDM, regarding the first time you met Sahabat Explorer?

*"I first heard/got to know Sahabat Explorer from a friend, since then our company has been using the services of WO Sahabat Explorer for office events for 3 years"*

Is there a particular aspect of the branding strategy (e.g. logo, tagline, advertising) that caught your attention or made you interested in using the Company?

*"So far I have nothing related to this, regarding being interested in using this company because it is creative and different from other WOs"*

How has Sahabat Explorer Event Organizer's branding strategy influenced your loyalty as a consumer?

*"Well, it is good at building relationships with consumers and the strategies used in the company are varied so that they are attractive to consumers"*

Is there a special element of the Sahabat Explorer Event Organizer brand that you think differentiates it from other competitors?

*"There is the word friend, where rarely anyone uses a word like that in the sense that the word attracts consumers to use it"*

Then the researcher conducted an interview with Loka Monitor Mamuju regarding how did you first hear about Sahabat Explorer Event Organizer?

*"I found out about Sahabat Explorer from colleagues/office friends and at that time my friend often used Sahabat Explorer in his office activities"*

How long have you been a customer of Sahabat Explorer Event Organizer?

*"I have been a consumer for 6 years, I entrust the company's activities because the owner himself is involved in activities and is creative"*

What is your experience with the services and events organized by Sahabat Explorer Event Organizer?

*"Good, but can be made more interesting and out of the box"*

Is there a particular aspect of the branding strategy (e.g. logo, tagline, advertising) that caught your attention or made you interested in using the Company? Tagline.

*"An interesting branding strategy is through social media Instagram, Tiktok or YouTube... because most of people's free time is currently spent on social media."*

Then the researcher conducted an interview with Balmon SFR Class I Makassar regarding, How did you first hear about Sahabat Explorer Event Organizer?

*"Information from friends located in Bandung and at the same time recommend using it"*

How long have you been a consumer of Sahabat Explorer Event Organizer and what made you choose Sahabat Explorer Event Organizer over other competitors?

*"Approximately 4-5 years and the first Friends of Explorer EO packaged activities seriously but fun. So that there is still value that can be learned from the entire series of activities but it is not boring and not monotonous, the Friends of Explorer team is all skilled at communicating, updating with developments, so they are able to know the*

*wishes of their clients, the SE EO team is not rigid in organizing activities, because the team is all millennials and gen Z are much more flexible"*

Is there a special element of the Sahabat Explorer Event Organizer brand that you think sets it apart from other competitors?

*"SE EO is very flexible and responsive in understanding and fulfilling customer desires compared to other EOs that we have worked with."*

### **Strategy Implementation**

Implementing a branding strategy has a very important role in building consumer loyalty. Branding is a process that involves creating, managing and developing a brand image or brand for a product or service. A branding strategy includes a series of steps designed to increase brand awareness, image and identity in the eyes of consumers. By strengthening brand identity and highlighting unique values, branding strategies help increase consumer awareness of the brand. Consumers who are more brand aware are more likely to choose the same product or service in the future. Branding strategy aims to form a positive image associated with the brand. A strong and positive image can build consumer trust and strengthen their loyalty to the brand.

Researchers have related, how has Sahabat Explorer Event Organizer's branding strategy influenced your loyalty as a consumer?

*"An effective branding strategy usually includes several, Consistent: Friends of Explorer Event Organizers must be consistent in conveying their messages, both through logos, designs, colors and the language used. This consistency helps build a strong brand identity in the minds of consumers. Customer Experience: They must provide a satisfying and consistent experience to their customers. This includes not only the quality of the events they host, but also customer interactions with staff, the ordering process, and so on. Differentiation: Friends of Explorer Event Organizers must stand out from competitors by offering something unique or different, whether it is in terms of the type of events they organize, the themes they offer, or the approach they use in organizing events. Emotional Marketing: They must leverage marketing that drives emotions to connect their brand with consumers on a deeper level. This can be done through inspirational stories, the use of powerful images and videos, or touching on values that are important to consumers. If Friends of Explorer Event Organizers are able to implement these strategies well, then they can influence consumer loyalty by creating strong relationships between brands and consumers, so that consumers tend to choose them again for their event organizing needs in the future."*

Do you feel more inclined to use the services of Sahabat Explorer Event Organizer again after seeing or experiencing their branding strategy? Why?

*"Yes, because Sahabat Explorer EO is very capable of building togetherness in activities and if Sahabat Explorer has consistent branding, with a clear message and a positive impression, customers may be more inclined to use its services again. Consistency can build trust and a strong impression of a brand."*

Next, the researcher conducted interviews with the informants regarding how the branding strategy of Sahabat Explorer Event Organizer has influenced your loyalty as a consumer?

*"Good at building relationships with customers, creative in terms of implementing games, etc."*

Next, do you feel more inclined to use the services of Sahabat Explorer Event Organizer again after seeing or experiencing their branding strategy? Why?

*"Yes, because the team from Friends Explore is creative, the few times we have used it, they often offer different games and continue to build good relationships with us."*

Based on the research results above, the branding strategy for Friends of Explorer which aims to increase consumer loyalty can involve several:

**Understanding the Target Audience:** The first step is to understand who the target audience of Friends of Explorer is. This includes understanding potential consumers' preferences, needs, and desires. With a strong understanding of who they serve, Friends of Explorer can direct their branding efforts more effectively. **Culture and Values:** Explorer Friends needs to clearly articulate their brand culture and core values. These can be values such as courage, adventure, sustainability, or exploration. **Strengthening emotional connections with consumers through these values can help build stronger bonds.** **Consistent Brand Experience:** Consistency is key in branding strategy. Explorer Friends must ensure that every touchpoint with the brand, from social media to physical products and customer service, consistently reflects their brand values and identity.

**Strong Brand Stories:** Friends of Explorer can harness the power of storytelling to build emotional connections with consumers. They can share inspiring stories of adventure, exploration, or in-depth sustainability efforts that reflect their brand's core values. **Attractive Loyalty Program:** Friends of Explorer can develop an attractive loyalty program to strengthen relationships with existing customers. These could be special offers, prizes, or exclusive experiences that are only available to loyalty program members. **Consumer Involvement:** Considering consumer involvement in brand and product development can be an effective strategy. Explorer Friends can ask their customers for feedback, engage them in brand content, or even host events or competitions that engage consumers. **Commitment to Sustainability:** In an era where sustainability is increasingly valued by consumers, Sahabat Explorer can strengthen their brand position by demonstrating their commitment to sustainable and environmentally friendly business practices. **Online Content and Communities:** Building an active and dedicated online community can be an effective way to increase consumer loyalty. Explorer Friends can leverage their social media platforms and websites to share relevant content, facilitate discussions and provide added value to their followers. By combining several of these strategies, Sahabat Explorer can strengthen their brand, deepen connections with consumers, and increase the overall level of consumer loyalty.

## Conclusion

In developing a branding strategy for Sahabat Explorer to increase consumer loyalty, several key points have been discussed: **Audience Understanding:** Understanding the target audience is a critical step in forming an effective branding strategy. **Articulation of Brand Values and Culture:** Explorer Friends needs to clearly articulate their brand's core values and culture, which can strengthen emotional bonds with consumers. **Brand Consistency:** Consistency in the delivery of brand values and identity at every point of contact with consumers is critical. **Powerful Storytelling:** Leveraging the power of storytelling can help Friends of Explorer build deeper connections with consumers. **Loyalty Program:** Developing an engaging loyalty program can help strengthen relationships with existing customers. **Consumer Involvement:** Involving consumers in brand and product development can strengthen brand ties. **Commitment to Sustainability:** Demonstrating a commitment to sustainable business practices can increase brand value in the eyes of consumers. **Online Content and Communities:** Building

an active online community can be an effective way to increase consumer loyalty. By combining these strategies, Sahabat Explorer can strengthen their brand identity, deepen relationships with consumers, and increase overall consumer loyalty levels. With a holistic and consistent approach, Sahabat Explorer can build a strong and sustainable brand in the long term. Build a strong and consistent brand image through design, messaging and interactions with consumers. Ensure that Sahabat Explorer's brand image reflects the values desired by consumers and differentiates the brand from competitors. Provide superior and responsive customer service. Respond to consumer questions, feedback or complaints quickly and efficiently, and ensure that every interaction with the brand leaves a positive impression. By implementing these suggestions consistently and continuously, Sahabat Explorer can strengthen their position in the market, build strong loyalty with consumers, and achieve long-term success.

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