

# The Superpower of a Superbrand: Advertising, Social Media, Marketing, Public Relations, and Event Strategies in Shaping Brand Image in Oppo Indonesia

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## ABSTRACT

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In Indonesia's competitive smartphone market, many brands struggle to optimize marketing tools effectively and fail to identify the right target market, leading to missed growth opportunities. A strong brand image is crucial for shaping public perception and aligning with consumer expectations. This paper examines OPPO's marketing strategies, emphasizing its advertising, social media engagement, marketing public relations (MPR), and event experiences as key elements in building a compelling brand image. Using a qualitative case study approach, the research includes in-depth interviews with three stakeholders at OPPO Indonesia and two marketing and PR experts to evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies. The results reveal that marketing communication strategies must be enhanced with creative content that emotionally engages audiences. This study introduces a new perspective on how brands can leverage their community to actively participate in shaping the brand narrative and building stronger connections with consumers. The research highlights that a positive brand image is vital for targeting the right markets, leading to improved sales performance and market share. The insights from this study offer valuable guidance for marketing professionals seeking to develop effective communication strategies to build and sustain brand equity in the dynamic smartphone market.

**Keywords:** social media, brand image, smartphone company, event experiences, economic growth

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## INTRODUCTION

Strong brand image and brand positioning are needed to increase and lead market share, especially for the smartphone market in Indonesia, which has intense competition due to the large size of the smartphone market in Indonesia (Prihananto et al., 2024). Marketers of various smartphone brands in Indonesia must build their brand image to target the right consumers. The Indonesian Central Bureau of Statistics stated that the average population of Indonesia reached 281,603.8 people in 2024. According to data from Reportal, the results of a survey conducted by We Are Social and Meltwater, the total number of internet-connected cellphones in Indonesia in early 2024 reached 353.3 million, equivalent to 126.8 percent of Indonesia's total population (Kemp, 2024). The data shows a very strong digital penetration, which has implications for changes in consumer behavior, especially in how they interact with brands and how perceptions of brands are formed. The high number of smartphone users in Indonesia means that smartphone brands in Indonesia must have a solid marketing strategy to build and strengthen their brand image in the competitive Indonesian market. They compete fiercely, trying to offer their products massively and achieve very high sales figures.

Achieving a higher market share is a challenging task for brands in Indonesia. To succeed, they must establish strong brand principles and foundations, along with clear differentiation strategies". Brand image is one of the main foundations and principles that support the success of a brand in marketing its products. This image not only reflects the character and values carried by the brand but also becomes an important element in shaping consumer perceptions. (Zulfikar, 2022). Therefore, brand image is built strategically to create a strong, prominent, and distinct identity in the market, to attract attention and increase competitiveness in the face of competitors. *Brand image* has a very important role in being a differentiator among competitors and a strong *marketing tool*. (Park and Park, 2019). Brand image has become an interesting subject of discussion in *marketing* literature because brand image is the basis and guide for marketing and advertising strategies that will be carried out by a brand. Brand image has significant power because it reflects the symbolic meaning that consumers associate directly with a particular product or service. (Tahir et al., 2024). Brand image can be defined as the perception of a brand that is reflected through brand associations embedded in the minds of consumers.(Kotler and Keller, 2016). All perceptions held by consumers associated with the brand can be conveyed and seen in the brand image. Most prominent smartphone brands in Indonesia are undoubtedly aware of this reality. They are striving to implement the most compelling marketing strategies to establish a strong brand image in consumers' perceptions. Nevertheless, a distinct differentiator is still necessary to ensure that a brand is more memorable to the audience. In the smartphone industry, product innovation is a very important element, but innovation is not important if marketers are unable to convey these innovations to the public with fresh packaging and inspire the hearts of each target market.(Calvosa, 2020). It takes a special touch, a touch that is able to move the hearts and emotions of the target market so that they are willing to spend their money to buy our products. These emotions can be used by marketers to create a community that can support sales and strengthen brand image.(Vrtana and Krizanova, 2023). Unfortunately, not all smartphone brands in Indonesia pay attention to emotional aspects that can be a key factor in building brand loyalty. Therefore, this study will discuss the marketing strategy carried out by one of the smartphone brands in Indonesia. This study will focus on one of the smartphone brands in Indonesia, OPPO. As reported through data from International Data Corporation (2024) on 2023, OPPO is ranked second among the five smartphone brands with the highest sales and growth in Indonesia (International Data Corporation, 2024). OPPO is a Chinese smartphone brand that was established in 2004. OPPO Indonesia has won the Superbrands Indonesia's Choice 2024 award in the *smartphone* category for five consecutive years (Damar, 2024). One of the most striking aspects of OPPO is its consistent focus on innovative camera technology (Manuhutu et al., 2021). The brand has often been at the forefront of introducing advanced features in smartphone photography, such as superior night shooting and powerful optical zoom capabilities. These advantages have made OPPO a top choice for those who value photographic quality daily. Despite offering advanced features, OPPO remains affordable, making it an attractive option for many people (Thuong, 2022).



**Indonesia's Smartphone Market, Top 5 Company Shipments, Market Share, and YoY Growth, 2023 (Shipments in millions)**

Company	2023 Shipment	2023 Market Share	2022 Shipment	2022 Market Share	YOY Growth
1. Samsung	6.9	20.0%	7.6	21.7%	-8.8%
2. OPPO	6.6	19.1%	7.8	22.4%	-15.6%
3. vivo	5.6	16.2%	6.3	17.9%	-10.7%
4. Xiaomi	5.1	14.8%	5	14.2%	3.5%
5. Transsion	4.5	13.1%	3.3	9.3%	38.9%
Others	5.8	16.7%	5.1	14.5%	13.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>34.6</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>-1.2%</b>

Source: IDC Quarterly Mobile Phone Tracker, 4Q23

Note:  
\* All figures are rounded off

**Figure 1: IDC Smartphone market share 2023**

Based on a report from Canalsys, in the second quarter of 2023, OPPO managed to lead the Indonesian market share with a market share of 20% and successfully outperformed its competitors ("OPPO Kembali Meraih Penghargaan Superbrands Indonesia 2023," 2023). The various kinds of success that OPPO has achieved confirm its dominance in the Indonesian smartphone market, supported by effective marketing communication strategies, quality products, and an extensive distribution network. Marketing Communication is the core of how a company utilizes strategy, planning, implementation, and evaluation in developing companies in the business world (Kamadi et al., 2022). However, marketing communication activities must be integrated to deliver consistent messages and achieve strategic brand positioning. (Kotler and Keller, 2016). Kotler and Keller (2016) suggest that integrated marketing communications can result in more substantial message consistency, help build brand equity, and create a more significant sales impact.

This research aims to examine how the advertising strategy, social media, public relations, and event experiences implemented by OPPO in building its brand image in Indonesia, and what differentiators and differentiation factors Oppo has, so that it can excel in the Indonesian smartphone market. By understanding the dynamics of the Indonesian market and consumer behavior, this research is expected to provide deeper insights into the effectiveness of marketing strategies so that they can be implemented by marketing practitioners from global brands.

According to Malhotra and Sirgy in Joshi and Garg (2021), brand Image is the reason or emotional perception of consumers that makes consumers have an attachment to certain specific brands. Consumers will be more likely to create stronger emotional connections with brands that match their self-image or self-concept. (Joshi and Garg, 2021). The consumer's image of the brand is a crucial thing that must be considered by all companies that want to develop their products. This is because Brand image is a means of creating cognitive and affective reactions. (Liang et al., 2024). Therefore, a brand needs to make a good impression to create a positive brand image. Aaker in Josi and Garg also argues that a positive brand image will encourage passion and love for the brand because consumers associate human-like characteristics with the brands they use (Joshi and Garg, 2021).

Brand image in business literature is based on consumer research. One of the most influential literatures on brand image is Aaker's (2018) model with five sources of brand equity consisting of brand awareness, brand associations, other brand assets, consumer perceived quality, and brand loyalty. Therefore, many of the conclusions in the business-to-business literature are the same as the consumer literature. As a result, brand image has a very strong role in influencing business customers, especially in markets where a product or service is difficult to distinguish based on its features or quality (Agarwal et al., 2018). Research shows that customer-based brand equity comes from the overall brand image created by the totality of brand associations perceived by customers (Habib Dada, 2021). The findings provide more evidence that brand image is a valuable asset for companies that own brands.

In addition to MPR, which plays a vital role in shaping the brand image, one marketing communication mix can provide a more in-depth direct experience for the target market. One way to provide a direct experience that becomes a bridge between the brand and the target market is through event experiences. Event Experiences are a means to be part of special and more personally relevant moments in consumers' lives. *Events* and *experiences* created by a brand can provide many benefits for the brand. According to previous research conducted by Crowther, Liu et al., and Wohlfeil and Whelan in Alstchwager et al., in 2022, the benefits of events and experiences are widely recognized. events can bring brands to life and can facilitate unique and meaningful experiences between consumers to generate their loyalty. (Altschwager et al., 2024). However, this will only happen if the events and experiences created contain three characteristics: relevant, engaging, and implicit. (Kotler and Keller, 2016). *Event experiences* reinforce communication messages and provide opportunities for consumers to experience products or services firsthand. Brands can interact directly with their audiences, provide immersive experiences, and strengthen emotional connections with their brands. The emotional

perception that arises in the minds of the target market can foster a sense of attachment to the brand, precisely so that the brand image arises in the minds of the target market.

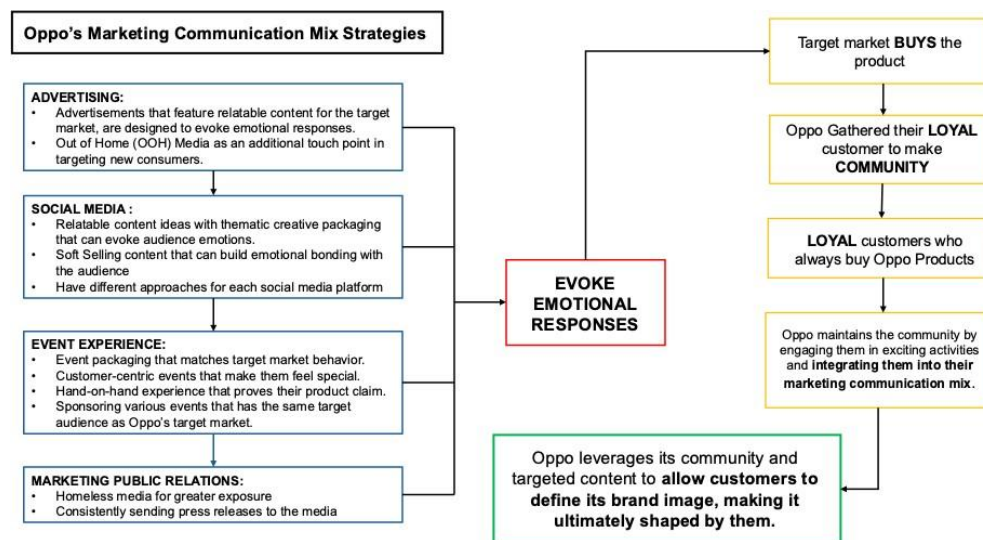
## **METHODS**

This research examines OPPO brand strategy and marketing communication mix used by OPPO so that they can become one of the smartphone market leaders in Indonesia. Based on the research problem, the appropriate approach to use in this research is an exploratory qualitative approach. The research approach was chosen because there is a phenomenon being studied. Qualitative research is research that can build statements of knowledge based on constructive perspectives (such as meanings derived from individual experiences, social values and history to build certain patterns of knowledge or theory) or based on participatory perspectives (such as issues, collaboration, or orientation towards politics) or both. This qualitative method was chosen because this research will understand a phenomenon felt by the research subject in a special context by utilizing various existing scientific methods. In qualitative exploratory research, researchers try to listen and build understanding based on what is heard from participants (Cresswell, 2009). The research used a case study qualitative research design. Case study research involves real cases in life (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This case study research design requires researchers to collect data using the in-depth interview method so that researchers get in-depth and complete information about the object of research. Data collection in this study was carried out by researchers by conducting in-depth interviews at the OPPO Indonesia headquarters office. Researchers conducted in-depth interviews with three people who were influential in making OPPO Indonesia's marketing strategy and content. Researchers interviewed the Head of Public Relations, Marketing Planner, and Digital Social Media leader from OPPO Indonesia. This interview process is used to collect data on how each division designs, develops, and implements marketing strategies used by OPPO Indonesia to build its brand image. In the interview, researchers also asked questions related to the challenges faced in facing competition, such as adaptation to consumer preferences, market dynamics, and innovation. The interviewees are ensured to be able to have a comprehensive perspective to enrich the data collected so that they can provide a holistic picture of the marketing communication mix used by OPPO Indonesia.

The data analysis process in the research went through several stages to ensure the validity of the data and its relevance. After the interview process was completed, the researcher made transcripts of the recorded interviews to get the data in a text format that was easier to analyze. In the next step, the transcripts were grouped according to the research questions and objectives to find patterns, themes, and relationships that emerged from each interviewee's answers. This data analysis can identify the main strategies used by OPPO Indonesia in building brand image, as well as evaluate the effectiveness of the advertising approach, social media, marketing, public relations, and event strategies applied. To validate existing data, researchers triangulate sources by testing the credibility of data through several different sources. The researcher validated the data with an expert Senior Public Relations Consultant and CEO of one of the Communication Agencies in Indonesia.

## **ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS**

This research shows how important brand image is in a competitive marketing context. Brand image serves as an identity that distinguishes products from competitors and becomes an effective tool in attracting consumer attention. The results of the research show what strategies OPPO uses to shape brand image through advertising, social media, marketing, public relations, and event experiences. The results of this research are presented in the flowchart below and will be further explained one by one.



Picture 1: Research findings

### The Marketing Communication Mix Strategies

The results of this study indicate that each element of the marketing communication mix used is emotionally based. Every advertisement produced by OPPO can foster curiosity and emotional movements from the target market that sees it. The content is made creative and adjusting to their target market traits and behavior, making everyone who sees the ads think that they relate to the ads. This has a positive impact, where the target market gives more attention to the advertisement. This is reinforced by additional touch points from using out of home (OOH) advertisements such as billboards and video screens to target new target audiences who may not have previously been exposed to the OPPO brand. Not just aiming to target new target markets, OPPO pays attention to the characteristics of their potential target market by placing OOH advertisements according to the demographics of the target market they want to target. For example, one of OPPO's products is a middle-class smartphone, so OPPO will place OOH ads at the airport. OPPO does the advertisement because people who go to the airport have the budget to travel by air transportation, so there is a high possibility that they can afford to buy products with the middle-up classification offered by OPPO.

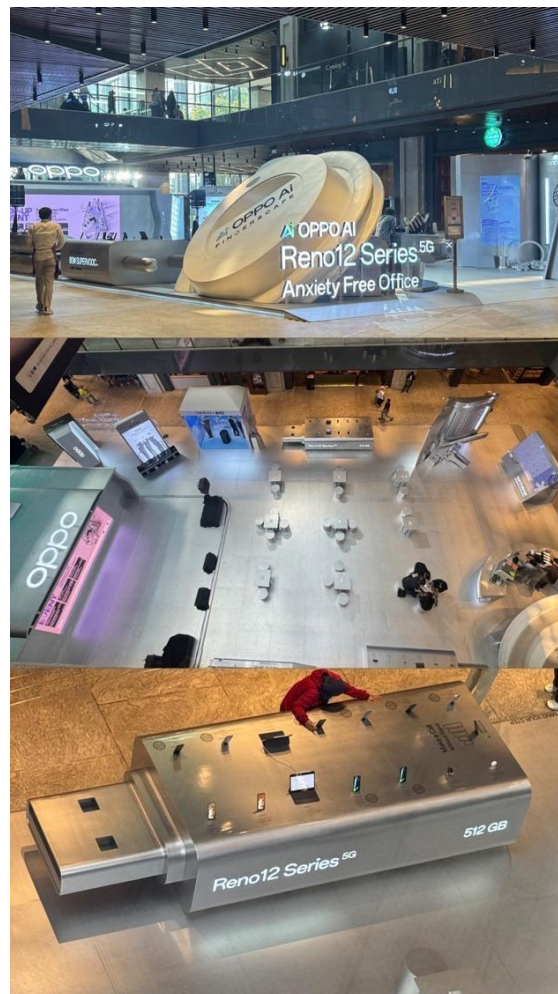
The social media strategies are complemented by their advertisement strategies. OPPO always presents a variety of social media content that relates to the complaints of its target market. In building an effective social media strategy, OPPO emphasizes the creation of relatable content ideas that are packaged creatively around specific themes to evoke emotional responses from the audience. This approach not only captures attention but also fosters a deeper connection by aligning the content with the audience's interests and experiences. The use of thematic and emotionally engaging content enables OPPO to differentiate itself in the competitive landscape while enhancing its brand image through consistent storytelling.

Furthermore, OPPO adopts a soft-selling approach to build emotional bonding with its audience. OPPO's soft selling is designed to build an emotional connection with the audience by answering common complaints of the target market that OPPO products can provide solutions to, thus encouraging more natural consumer engagement without appearing to be too pushy for direct sales. The content is also packaged with thematic creative.

This strategy is complemented by the implementation of platform-specific content, where each social media platform is treated uniquely to maximize its potential. OPPO has a different strategy for each social media platform that is tailored to the features of the social media so that the content can be packaged well and the message can be conveyed to the audience optimally. For example, the Instagram



platform which has a catalog-like user interface and has a collaborator feature is used by OPPO to focus on uploading product photos and collaborative content with partners while TikTok which is a short video platform is used by OPPO to upload short duration videos that adjust to trends where the first 5 seconds trigger the audience to watch the rest of the video. This is also done on other social media platforms such as Facebook, which contains a lot of promo content, and YouTube, which contains content in the form of long-form. By tailoring content to the unique characteristics of each platform, OPPO ensures its marketing efforts resonate effectively with diverse audience segments, further strengthening brand loyalty. OPPO also has guidelines and social media brand books that must be obeyed and implemented by all social media staff so that the messages conveyed are always consistent with the brand image that it wants to build.



**Picture 2**OPPO Event (Personal Documentation)

The research results from the previous two marketing communication mixes show that every communication carried out by OPPO is consumer-centric and not product-centric. This is consistently done by OPPO until the event experiences they have. OPPO's event strategies are meticulously designed to align with the behavior and preferences of its target market. By tailoring event packaging to resonate with audience expectations, OPPO ensures a more meaningful connection with participants. For example, OPPO held a product launch event in one of the shopping centers located in the office area of Jakarta, which is often a hangout place for office people who at that time became the main target market of the launched product. Not only the location of the event, but OPPO transformed the event venue from a mall atrium into an interactive showroom that resembled the shape of a work desk, complete with elements typical of an office environment, to create an atmosphere that was relevant and attractive to the target market. These customer-centric events are crafted to make attendees feel valued and special,

further enhancing their emotional bond with the brand. This personalized approach not only elevates the brand experience but also fosters long-term loyalty among consumers.

Additionally, OPPO emphasizes experiential marketing by offering hands-on experiences that allow participants to directly engage with their products, substantiating the brand's claims through tangible proof. Furthermore, OPPO actively sponsors various events that attract audiences sharing similar characteristics with its target market. This sponsorship strategy enables the brand to expand its reach, connect with potential customers, and reinforce its presence in relevant consumer circles. For example, OPPO has a target market of people who are interested in fashion, therefore, OPPO collaborates with Harper's Bazaar and fashion week events in Indonesia.

To strengthen the publication of the three existing marketing communication mixes, OPPO also involves public relations activities to expand the share of voice of OPPO. The results of this study show that in this era, public relations stakeholders have shifted from traditional media to electronic media. To get greater exposure and share of voice, OPPO uses homeless media or digital accounts that go viral on various social media platforms. This is done by OPPO because homeless media contained in social media is easier to share or shareable, and many target markets of OPPO use digital and electronic media more than traditional media.

In addition, OPPO utilizes homeless media as part of its public relations strategy to gain broader exposure and reach a wider audience. By leveraging media platforms that are not owned or controlled by the brand, OPPO ensures its messages are disseminated through credible third-party sources, enhancing both visibility and trust. This strategic use of homeless media allows OPPO to extend its reach beyond owned media channels, effectively engaging diverse audience segments through organic media coverage and building its brand reputation.

Consistent with this approach, OPPO carefully integrates its homeless media activities into the broader marketing communication mix. The brand meticulously plans traditional media releases and homeless media content to align with current trends and capitalize on momentum. For instance, in one notable example, when the President of the Republic of Indonesia took a selfie using an OPPO smartphone, the OPPO team swiftly created media releases and leveraged various social media platforms to highlight the credibility and quality of their product. By connecting such moments to its homeless media strategy, OPPO effectively amplifies its brand presence and strengthens consumer trust through strategic, trend-driven communication.

### **The Emotional Approach Makes It Happen**

OPPO always uses emotional aspects in every marketing communication element. This is one of the differentiations of OPPO, which is quite different from its competitors. The emotional approach that OPPO applies aims to evoke an emotional response from its target market. The experience of touching the emotional side of the target market created by OPPO can attract their attention more deeply. This strategy involves using content and communication that is relevant to the needs, expectations, and lifestyle of the target market, so that the target market feels more connected to the brand.

This emotional approach has a positive impact on OPPO. Their target market is encouraged to buy the products offered. By providing an emotional experience through the 4 elements of the marketing communication mix, OPPO not only influences purchasing decisions but also creates higher loyalty to their brand. Not stopping there, OPPO utilizes the loyalty of its consumers to build a community. This community becomes a place of interaction between customers and brands, where OPPO continues to strengthen emotional connections with them. This strategy allows OPPO to better understand consumer needs and expectations while creating an environment that supports long-term loyalty. The community built by OPPO consists of loyal customers who always choose OPPO products in each of their purchasing decisions. These customers are not only users, but also supporters and brand ambassadors who indirectly influence other potential customers. Apart from customers, OPPO also

strives to attract their community of experts, such as photographers, and build a community of young people who are tech-savvy through OPPO Campus Ambassadors.



**Picture 3** Oppo Community - photowalk activity

These communities are well-maintained through various interesting activities that involve them directly. These activities are also integrated into OPPO's marketing communication mix strategy, so that the community is not only a relationship booster but also supports the success of marketing communication as a whole. One example of their activities is the Community Photowalk, where OPPO invites OPPO product ambassadors to explore one of their products. This research shows how OPPO is able to use the community and carefully crafted content that aligns with a deep understanding of its target market, enabling its customers to define the brand image it aims to establish. Thus, OPPO's brand image is ultimately defined by its customers.

### **The Impact**

The Marketing Communication Mix plays a pivotal role in shaping the brand image for OPPO. Brand image represents consumers' emotional perceptions, creating a unique sense of connection between the consumer and the brand. In practice, target markets are more easily influenced when emotional involvement is established. This emotional connection arises when a brand successfully aligns its image or concept with the preferences and characteristics of its target market. Therefore, it is crucial for brands to have the ability to deeply analyze and understand the user persona of their intended audience.

Based on the research findings, the brand OPPO has successfully classified its target market in alignment with its product offerings. As a result, every element of the marketing communication mix is tailored to resonate with its audience, ensuring maximum impact. The high sales performance of OPPO's products can be attributed to the carefully crafted brand image that effectively connects with



the target market. This success stems from OPPO's deep understanding of its audience, enabling the brand image to be shaped organically by the consumers themselves. While the Marketing Communication Mix serves as a fundamental strategy in building brand image, it is futile without accurately identifying and targeting the right audience.

No matter how significant the marketing budget, efforts will be wasted if the brand fails to conduct thorough research into the profiles of its potential target market. Effective marketing is not solely about choosing the right channels but about understanding the audience, crafting content that resonates with them, and packaging it with compelling creativity. Relatability and relevance are key. By capturing the audience's attention, evoking emotional responses, and fostering engagement, a brand can establish itself as meaningful and personal in the eyes of its customers. Ultimately, the cornerstone of success lies in knowing the audience and delivering content in a way that authentically connects with them, making the brand not just a product but a part of their lives.

## **CONCLUSION**

The conclusion of this paper underscores the vital importance of a robust brand image in securing market leadership, especially within Indonesia's fiercely competitive smartphone industry. The findings reveal that a well-orchestrated integration of advertising, social media, marketing, public relations (PR), and event experiences is instrumental in cultivating a positive brand perception among consumers. Each component of the marketing communication mix plays a unique yet interconnected role in building and sustaining a brand's image in the minds of its audience.

Advertising serves as a foundational element, enhancing brand visibility and shaping consumer perceptions through targeted campaigns that align with the values and aspirations of the target market. It acts as the initial touchpoint where potential customers are introduced to the brand's offerings and its unique value proposition. Social media, on the other hand, enables real-time engagement with the audience, fostering an emotional connection through relatable content, interactive campaigns, and consistent communication. By leveraging various social media platforms, brands can humanize their image and create a sense of community that resonates deeply with their target market.

MPR is emerging as a critical strategy in establishing credibility and trust. Unlike traditional advertising, MPR relies on authentic narratives that align with the brand's identity and values, enabling it to build a trustworthy reputation. This authenticity enhances the brand's relatability and reinforces consumer confidence in its offerings. Additionally, event experiences provide immersive, hands-on opportunities for consumers to interact with the brand. These experiences create memorable emotional connections that transcend traditional marketing efforts, fostering a sense of loyalty and personal investment in the brand.

The study also highlights the strategic importance of understanding and selecting the right target market. OPPO's ability to align its marketing communication strategies with the specific needs and preferences of its target audience has proven to be a key driver of its success. By deeply analyzing consumer behavior and tailoring its messaging accordingly, the brand has effectively positioned itself as a leader in the industry.

In conclusion, the research demonstrates that cultivating a strong brand image through integrated marketing strategies not only drives positive consumer perceptions but also translates into tangible business outcomes. Increased sales performance, enhanced market share, and sustained competitive advantage are achievable when a brand consistently engages with its audience and delivers value that aligns with their expectations. The dynamic smartphone industry demands such strategic approaches, making the integration of these elements essential for long-term success.

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