

# The Effectiveness of Mass Marketing Communication as a Digital Logistics Tools in Promoting a New Online Public Service Platform

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**Abstract** - This paper aims to review a framework that investigate the effectiveness of mass marketing communication as a digital logistics tools toward promoting a new online public service platform “i-akaun” for Employees Provident Fund (EPF). The use of online public service platform by the government for participatory and interactive relationships is increasing today. More precisely, the descriptive nature of the study resides in its ability to explain how mass marketing communication as a digital logistics tools can promote the usage of new online service platform users regard the status performance of advertising, public relation and event as mass marketing as a digital logistics tools. A critical analysis of mass marketing communication as a digital logistics tool wheel shows it to be a checklist, a starting point in the examination on a set of mass marketing communication mix tool, but it is not as such of immense help to the decision maker and it was followed by a quantitative approach with a descriptive analysis was involve. Hence, the survey and observation are the methods that will used to collect the information and data. The analysis of communication gaps gives directions for formulating strategic decisions. In this framework, tactical decisions concern the components of the mass marketing communication as a digital logistics tools mix framework, activities, means and vehicles of communication.

**Keyword** – Co-creation, mass marketing, digital service platform, advertising, public relations

## 1. INTRODUCTION

There are six types of activities that will enhance the effectiveness of promotional namely are advertising,

public relations, events or experiences, sales promotion, direct marketing and personal selling [3]. These activities help companies to communicate the products or services message to consumer through different platforms of promotion activity that will play a huge role in putting across the organization’s message to achieve the business goals. From these six types of promotional activities there are three activities portray mass communication criteria. Realizing the differences in communication channels or tools leads to effectiveness and cost, this study examines marketing communications as divided into mass media, personal, and device-mediated channels and focus on only mass media marketing communication tolls. This channel-wise approach has not been widely employed, although it benefits marketing managers who are attempting to maximize the effectiveness of the communications mix. As a result, the cultivation in promoting a new online service platform can be considered without neglecting the reality of intense development in the digital world and new wave marketing development.

Malaysia Employees Provident Fund (EPF) strives to keep up with the latest developments in corporate governance. As there has been an increasing focus on environment, social and governance (ESG) investing, the management has been incorporating these into their own investment consideration. EPF believes that sound corporate governance promotes strong leadership by the long-term success of a company. EPF also continues to regard good governance as an integral body to protect the interest of its stakeholders and the reputation of its fund. Hence, promotional activities which act as a medium of communication need to be carried out to promote the new ‘i-akaun’

program to attract young generation, potential and existing employees to use 'i-akaun' as everything is online, efficient and safe time when using 'i-akaun' for their payment contribution.

Many businesses and non-business organization are affected by the development of digital service platform and technology trends. The digital service platform provides a context within which different individuals can interact direct to the service provider organization. Most of the governments today are moving towards a digital government and need to leverage Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to transform services provided into ICT program. Therefore, EPF has introduced a new program named 'i-akaun' back in January 2012 ([www.kwsp.gov.my](http://www.kwsp.gov.my)).

Online public service platform converts major general service usage from offline to online, therefore online social networks can help to strengthen and intensify people's offline relationships [3]. In addition, studies of co-located communities that are supported by online networks have shown that computer-mediated actions have a positive effect on the interaction and involvement within the community.

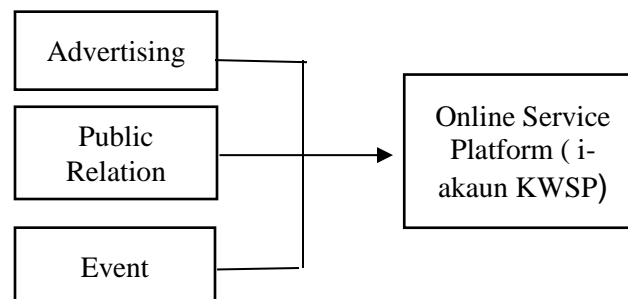
To benefit from the usage of online social networks, service user must use the networks, not only to stay in contacts with already existing ties but also to connect with users they do not know. Different studies show that a lot of service users do not see the purpose or benefit of using social networks. [17] have suggested that the existing social networks do not seem to fit the everyday communication of service users. Other reasons for not using online social networks are safety concerns and user interfaces that do not fit the requirements of the service users.

In the next section, relevant literature is reviewed to understand what is already known about the relationships between introducing new values such as the new online public service platform through marketing communications. Then, the conceptual research paper will propose a theoretical framework that will lead to some hypotheses testing in future study. Subsequently, the study's methodology and empirical context are discussed, followed by descriptive analysis. Finally, the results and their contribution to the theoretical and practical understanding of mass marketing promotional as a digital logistics tools are discussed, and limitations and further research topics are addressed.

## 2. CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

In this chapter, it describes the literature reviews that are used in this study. According to [37] there are three type of promotional activities that seen a similar to EPF's promotional activities which are advertising, public relations and events experiences. Literature review started with the dependent variable and

continuing to independent variables. Hence, in this chapter, researcher will provide supported evidence from previous literature.



Sources adapted from Yimsiri S. (2011)

Figure 2: Theoretical Framework

### 2.1. Effectiveness of Promotional Activities

Promotion is a collection of devices aimed at generating active customer response within a short period of time. According to [13] there have six types of promotion activities which is advertising, public relations, events and experiences, sales promotion, direct marketing and personal selling. Each of promotional activities have their own function towards the business structure that apply this element for their organization [33].

In promotion, it will be used as a medium to inform, remind, persuade and influence customer's behaviour about the products and services offered in market segment [21]. One of the factors favouring effectiveness of promotional activities is the easy-to-track and increase in sales during promotion that appear to be justifiable. Promotional activities are much closed to the customers and organization in order to spread the news about the products and services. Without this type of marketing strategies, it may cause a bad reputation to the business like unable to attract customers and it also may cause a failure towards the products and services that introduce by organization [37]. So, as promotion is part of marketing strategies it is very crucial for all business structure to defining, anticipating, creating and fulfilling customer's need and wants for products and services as suggested by [2].

Besides that, it also focuses on motivational techniques using promotion strategies. According to [35], this will lead to effectiveness of promotional activities that will encourage customers to increase their intention towards the products and services offered by organization in market segment. Most of the organization will apply promotion activities for their business as they know this technique able to

increase and easier for their company's image and spread about new product and services [4]. The American Marketing Association defines promotion part of marketing as the process of planning and executing the ideas, goods, distribution to create exchanges that will satisfy customers and organization itself [8]. These techniques are important to create awareness towards the products offering by using promotion as a motivational technique in marketing. As a conclusion, there is a nexus between promotion and organization effectiveness [6]. Promotion will help the organization to increase the reputation and enhance the profitability in future. It will lead to the strong capability for the organization in keeping their business growth and build strong relationship between company and customers and used for consumer's provocation to buy more and faster [22]. Hence, the short term and long term growth of organization can rely to the effectiveness of promotional activities that use by organization and give an impact for companies [34].

## 2.2. Advertising

Advertising is a paid communication about a company's product and service in which company are identified [7]. It is external signal to show the quality of products and services [8]. This method uses to persuade receiver to take some action in the future. The business structure used to utilize target marketing in generates their company's image. Advertising are known as mediated communication as suggested by [36] which conveyed the messages about company's product and service via print, electronic, media and others that have to be pay by the organization. Furthermore, it includes traditional advertising that will enhance the connection between customers and the organization that lead to the changes of people's belief, attitude and also their purchase behaviour [13]. Advertising feeds on the concepts of ideology, myth, art and religion. It will infuse image ideas into products and services that offered by organization. Next, advertising can used variety of medium to spread about their brands offering in the market by using websites, books and magazines, television and others. This is known as one-way communication between customers and organization [20]. If the advertising is good, it's able to attract customers towards the products and services which offer by company. So, it can give profitability and rapidly increase in future.

In a nutshell, advertisement is able to reached large audience in a short-time and can create brand awareness towards the products and services offered by organization [21]. In fact, [5] also suggested that advertising is a communication model that has more known by the people in the market because people are

informed through advertisement. So, advertising able to minimize the barriers between consumers and organization and can give a profit the company in future [6].

## 2.3. Public Relations

Public relations refer to strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics [7]. Almost large organization needs a public relations department. This is because public relations are seen as a vital part of maintaining the organization's image and communicating its message to its customers, investors and general public. Besides that, public relations concern on the engagement and relationship building as suggested by PSRA National Assembly in 2011. Company will build a relationship with another organization that have a strong image in order to give a good reputation for their company's image. Public relation is able to enhance profitability and company's growth in future.

A positive perception of a company can increase its sales and improve its bottom lines. According to [8], public relation also helps company to communicate with employees, suppliers, stakeholders and customers. There have a person or department that will manage the public relation for the company and the other organization. So, public relations very important in manage other organization to keep in touch with our company in long-term period.

As a conclusion, public relations are highly effective on the costs perspective as it able to reach customers to attract with our company [9]. So, getting good publicity can encourage company's corporate image and it required careful planning, persistent effort for PR consultant. This will transform business structure into one of the most trusted and respectable organization in the industry by unofficial spokesperson that spread the information of our products and services [24]. Then, it will give a competitive advantage for us compared to another company.

## 2.4. Event

Nowadays, most of organization tied their products and services that introduce by their company with an event and experienced. This is crucial to make people aware with their brands offered in the market. According to [10] this purpose creates an awareness through the activities for consumers and promoting products and services [25]. These methods become popular in recent years as integrated marketing program that often used in events or experiences. So, the customers able to gain experience and knowledge that can match with their lifestyles and company's brand [12].

Moreover, events can identify the target audience in the market for the products and services offered by company [13]. In fact, the events that organize by company may create customer's awareness and attract them to choose products and services that introduce by company. Basically, marketers will set event marketing by associating their products and services with popular events like concerts, trade shows, sports and others [37]. Hence, it will help organization to attract more customers towards their products and services.

Lastly, events also can be seen as sports events, ceremony, meeting, talk, conference and others [14]. Each event has people who will manage it like in managing activities, organizing funding, organization security, and other events that can improve organization's performance [15]. Therefore, events assigned roles and responsibilities, ownership of tools and processes, critical success and the event-handling procedure in measure the effectiveness of promotional activities in future. The organization will choose the form of activities that are match with their products or services that match with their products and services to spread the information to the end users during the events or experiences that will be carried out by the company itself.

### 2.5. Hypothesize

The hypotheses for this research as follow:

**H1:** There is a significant relationship between advertising and effectiveness of promotional activities of 'i-akaun'.

**H2:** There is a significant relationship between public relations and effectiveness of promotional activities of 'i-akaun'.

**H3:** There is a significant relationship between events and effectiveness of promotional activities of 'i-akaun'.

## 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology is presented in nine sections which is research design, research framework, research hypothesis, unit of analysis, population, sample size, sampling technique, data collection and data analysis are explain in detail.

### 3.1. Research Design

The research design used in this study is descriptive research. For this study, the data to be collected is quantitative and will used cross sectional design to collect the information from given sample that used only once. Hence, the survey and observation are the

methods that will used in order to collect the information and data.

### 3.2. Population

Population in this study is EPF's employees that will base on convenience of employees.

### 3.3. Sample Size

Sample size for this research will be 100 respondents who will participate in answering the questionnaire that will be distributed by the researcher. So, sample sizes larger than 30 and less than 500 are appropriate for most research.

*Sample size based on Krejcie and Morgan (1970)*

N	S
75 000	382

### 3.4. Sampling Technique

In this research, it used non probability sampling that means it do not use chance selection procedures but that instead rely on the researcher's personal judgment or convenience. Researcher will choose respondents based on person who is there by accident. This sampling method is more economical and relevant to time frame allocated from this study.

### 3.5. Data Collection Method

The methods of collecting data in this study consist of primary and secondary data.

### 3.6. Primary Data

To obtain primary data, researcher used questionnaire which a structured question will be used to measure the advertising, public relations, events and the effectiveness of promotional activities of 'i-akaun' provided by EPF. It will be used to answer the research questions.

### 3.7. Secondary Data

This data already gathered by someone sources. There have a few sources that use to collect the information for this research which is electronic sources, journals and academic books and internet.

### 3.8. Questionnaire Development

The questionnaire consists of three section which is section A, B and C. Section A covers on the independent variables questions that includes on advertising, public relations and event whereas in section B explain on the effectiveness of promotional activities of 'i-akaun'. Meanwhile in section C focus on demographic section that will use to collect respondents background. Nominal and ordinal scales

were used as the level of measurement. The summary of questionnaire used in this research is stated below.

#### 4. ANALYSIS

##### 4.1. Data Collection

A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents that comes to EPF Shah Alam excluding the employees in EPF Shah Alam and all the 100 questionnaire were returned and filled completely by the respondents that have shown on the table 4.1 below about the response rate of respondents in this study. Next, all the data from the questionnaire that have been collected were coded and data were key in the database by using SPSS 20.0 version to run the data received from respondents.

##### 4.2. Descriptive Analysis

Based on the table 1 portrays the mean and standard deviation for each item of questionnaire in this study. Table 1 shows the value of mean and standard deviation for each independent variable are advertising, public relations and events, while the dependent variable is an effectiveness of promotional activities.

Moreover, the number of respondent who participated in this study is N=100 respondents and none of missing value in the collected data received by researcher. This study using 5 point of Likert Scale that begin from 5 (strongly disagree), 4 (disagree), 3 (neutral), 2 (agree) and 1 (strongly agree) as a measurement tools in order to examine the level of respondent's satisfaction on each item in the questionnaire

As presented in the table below, the mean for effectiveness of promotional activities (dependent variable) is 4.032 and the standard deviation equal to 0.677. Next, for the independent variables which is advertising the mean is 4.260 and standard deviation is 0.536 while for public relation's mean is 4.247 and standard deviation is 0.491. Last but not least, the mean for events is 4.144 with standard deviation value is 0.564.

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation
Effectiveness Promotional activities	4.0320	.67672
Advertising	4.2600	.53598
Public Relations	4.2467	.49093
Events	4.1440	.56360

Overall, all the mean for independent variables and dependent variables consider good because the value not exceed five while for the standard deviation the lowest value considers better because the variance or dispense of our respondents are low. This might be happened when most of respondents choose a similar scale in the questionnaire given to them. So, below than 1 do not deviate the mean.

##### 4.3. Reliability Analysis

Dimensions	No. of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Advertising	5	.838
Public Relations	6	.870
Events	5	.808
Effectiveness of promotional activities of i-akaun	5	.901

Table 2: Reliability analysis

Table 2 represent the reliability results of questionnaire in Section A and B. In the Section A, it portrays the independent variables in this study which is advertising, public relations and events. While in Section B portrays the dependent variable. The highest reliability in this study comes from dependent variable in Section B where the Cronbach's Alpha is 0.901 that have an excellent strength of the value reliability. The second highest value reliability comes from public relations (0.870) in section A, followed by advertising (0.838) and the remainder are events (0.808) respectively.

##### 4.4. Pearson Correlations Analysis

So, in the table 3 below shows the highest correlation coefficient, the stronger relationship among each variable.

Table 3: Correlation Coefficient Analysis

		Effective ness of promotio nal activities	Adver tising	Public Relatio ns	Event
Effective ness of promotio nal activities	Pearson Correlation	1	.671**	.568**	.697**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	100	100	100	100
Advertisi ng	Pearson Correlation	.671**	1	.647**	.720**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	100	100	100	100
Public Relations	Pearson Correlation	.568**	.647**	1	.624**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	100	100	100	100
Event	Pearson Correlation	.697**	.720**	.624**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	100	100	100	100

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 above portrays the correlation coefficient between dependent variable and all of the three independent variables. Firstly. It is shown that the dependent variable which is the effectiveness of promotional activities is positively correlated with all of the independent variables which are advertising, public relations and event. The value of advertising  $r=.671$  or 67.1% is significant and have a relationship with dependent variable which is effectiveness of promotional activities with all scale value of  $p$  0.000, followed by public relations,  $r=.568$  or 56.8%. The event also significant and have a relationship with scale value is .697 or 69.7%. Hence, it reflects that all independent variables is positively influenced by dependent variable in this study.

**4.5. Regression Assessment**

Regression analysis is a method to examine whether independent variables have impact to the dependent variable of the study (Sekaran & Bougle, 2010). Researcher will seek to the causal effect on the one variable to one another. In order to explore that matter, researcher will gather the possible data on the underlying variables before compute regression to estimate quantitative effect of the variables that may influence relationship in the study. The analysis was performed to determine whether advertising, public relations and events have any relationship towards the effectiveness of promotional activities.

Table 4: Summary of Coefficient Analysis

Variable	Beta	Significance
Effectiveness of Promotional Activities of I-Akaun		.475
Advertising	.302	.005
Public Relations	.121	.201
Events	.404	.000

Based on the table 4 above, the independent variables that mostly influence people to invest in EPF are events with a beta value of 0.404 followed by second highest which is advertising with a value of 0.302 and the last one is public relations which is 0.121. So, events indicate that it have the strongest unique contribution to explaining the dependent variable.

Table 5: Regression Model Summary

Mode	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.743 <sup>a</sup>	.552	.538	2.29898

R square ( $r^2$ )

Based on the above table 5, it indicates dimensions to determine the dependent variable of the effectiveness promotional activities of 'i-akaun' towards the advertising, public relations and en events. Based on the table above, the R square shows the value of 0.552 which refers to how much of the variance in dependent variable is explained by the model which is advertising, public relations and events. The 55% of dependent variable is influenced by independent variables but there also have another factor that may influence to the dependent variable in this study like direct marketing, attractive scheme and others.

## 5. Hypothesis Discussion

Table 6: Summary of Hypothesis

Hypothesis	Significance	Result
H <sub>1</sub> : There is a significant relationship between advertising and effectiveness of promotional activities of 'i-akaun'.	Significant	Accepted
H <sub>2</sub> : There is a significant relationship between public relations and effectiveness of promotional activities of 'i-akaun'.	Not Significant	Rejected
H <sub>3</sub> : There is a significant relationship between events and effectiveness of promotional activities of 'i-akaun'.	Significant	Accepted

Table 6 illustrated the summary of the entire research hypothesis. All of the independent variables which are advertising, public relations and events were tested by using regression method for the purpose of hypothesis testing whether it can be accepted or rejected.

Additionally, the findings indicate that advertising and events have significant relationship with dependent variables which is the effectiveness of promotional activities of 'i-akaun'. While public relations variables are not significant due to the value are more than 0.05.

So, the hypothesis for public relations will be rejected and the rest hypotheses for this study are significant and accepted based on the scale value in the findings. As a conclusion, only hypothesis for the advertising and event are accepted in this study.

## 6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

### 6.1. Conclusion

The purpose of the study focused on the effectiveness of EPF promotional activities of 'i-akaun'. Out of 100 questionnaires have been distributed to the employees and people around Shah Alam and all data are successful collected without any missing questionnaire. In researcher observation, most of the

respondents in this study are Malay which is 73% compared to the other religion. The highest occupational statuses are employees of government sector with the percentage of 49% and the education level will be undergraduate which is 27%. Majority of respondent also have more than RM 6 000 income per month.

Based on the data collected, the relationships between advertising, public relations, events and effectiveness of promotional activities of 'i-akaun' being supported through the Pearson correlation. All the variables are significant and correlated to one another with all scale value are  $p=0.000$ . [19] also suggested that the highlight statistical terms shows the relationship between the variables which expressed by correlation coefficient between range 0 to 1.0. Thus, all value for Pearson correlation the highest correlation coefficient and has a stronger relationship among each variable.

Researcher also tries to study which factor that more effective to the promotional activities of 'i-akaun'. The hypothesis will be testing when researcher come out with regression analysis on all variables. Based on the result, it shows that advertising and event have a significant relationship with the effectiveness of promotional activities of 'i-akaun' done by EPF. So, the hypotheses are significant and accepted. Meanwhile for the event variable, the value of significant is more than 0.05 which is 0.201 shows that public relations are not making a significant unique contribution to the effectiveness of promotional activities of 'i-akaun' carried out by EPF. Thus, the hypothesis will be rejected in this study.

Additionally, the  $r$  square ( $r^2$ ) of multiple regression shows 55% of dependent variable (effectiveness of promotional activities) is influenced by the independent variables (advertising, public relation and event) but there have another factor exists in contribute to another effectiveness of promotional activities. So, researcher has come out with a several recommendations that can be used by the company and future researchers.

### 6.2. Recommendation

This study has revealed a few recommendations for the effectiveness of EPF promotional activities towards the usage of 'i-akaun'. It is crucial to increased growth for the EPF's scheme and services that have been provided to the people. In order to attract people to invest with EPF, the management must provide attractive scheme to their customers. This is to ensure people create awareness towards the new products and services that are launched in the

market. For an example, EPF can give a better offer for the employees who registered with EPF such as provide a mystery gift with a limited time. So, it can attract more employees to invest with EPF and build a strong relationship between employees and EPF itself.

Additionally, EPF also can make an alliance with other institutional or any sectors to spread the information about the products and services provided by them. This strategy can attract huge number of customers when they have been persuading by strong institution regarding the products offering by EPF. It is not only can build strong relationship between EPF and customers, but able to build relation with the institutional too. For an example, EPF can makes alliances with Maybank, Amanah Raya, Bank Rakyat, Tamco and other sectors. Therefore, customers already get a knowledge about EPF' offering before they make an investment in EPF scheme in future.

Furthermore, EPF also can use direct marketing to attract more people invest with them. According to [20] direct marketing is to obtain connections of targeted customers to get immediate response and build lasting relationship with them. Usually company will use direct mail, television, catalogs, mobile devices and others to attract customer's awareness and intention about their company's products and services. Besides, [21] also suggested that the management also can used viral marketing that may emerged in modern marketing practice to create sense of customers' view regarding the products and services provided by them. Hence, direct marketing aims to deliver a good return on investment to the company by showing the potential customers' action and engagement towards the company's offering.

### 6.3. Limitation and Future Study

As been stated above, there have several limitations that faced by the researcher in conducting this research. In future, researcher might challenge time constraint to execute the research whilst have to divide between research and works during internship period. Thus, it might affect the quality of research in gather the information needed by researcher.

Furthermore, respondent's cooperation also affected this study when future researchers ask for their help to complete the questionnaire. Respondents also would face the difficulties to answer the questionnaire and it will cause a missing value. So, future researcher must have strong strategy on attracting respondents for their study.

Last but not least, future researcher also will face a problem to the financial constraint due to prepare for the proposal and report is undeniably expensive. It

might be to cost of transportation of toll fares to distribute the questionnaire, print and others costs that needs to be taken into accounts too.

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