



## THE ROLE OF ELECTRONIC CITY'S PERSUASIVE COMMUNICATION TO INCREASE SALES: A CASE STUDY OF THE KOTA KASABLANKA BRANCH

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### Abstract

*The retail industry plays a crucial role in Indonesia's economy, contributing significantly to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The COVID-19 pandemic has shifted consumer behavior, marked by the increase in online shopping activities, declining purchasing power, and the need for retailers to adapt their business strategies. This condition requires companies to develop communication strategies that are not only informative but also persuasive, in order to build trust, foster loyalty, and influence purchasing decisions. Electronic City, as one of the largest modern electronic retail companies in Indonesia, faces challenges from the rapid growth of e-commerce and marketplaces that offer more competitive prices. To address these challenges, Electronic City implemented an omnichannel strategy by combining physical stores with digital platforms, supported by persuasive communication efforts such as product consultation services, the "shop safely from home" campaign, and promotional programs like 0% installment. This study aims to examine the role of persuasive communication in Electronic City's efforts to increase sales, with a particular focus on its Kota Kasablanka branch. This research employs a descriptive qualitative method with a case study approach. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation related to Electronic City's communication strategies. The findings are expected to provide theoretical contributions to the study of marketing communication as well as practical recommendations for retail businesses in designing effective persuasive communication strategies in the digital era.*

**Keywords:** persuasive communication, communication strategy, electronic retail

### Abstrak

Industri ritel merupakan salah satu sektor penting dalam perekonomian Indonesia dengan kontribusi signifikan terhadap Produk Domestik Bruto (PDB). Pandemi COVID-19 telah mengubah pola perilaku konsumen, yang ditandai dengan meningkatnya aktivitas belanja daring, penurunan daya beli, serta penyesuaian strategi bisnis oleh para pelaku ritel. Kondisi tersebut menuntut perusahaan untuk mengembangkan strategi komunikasi yang tidak hanya informatif, tetapi juga persuasif guna membangun kepercayaan, loyalitas, serta mendorong keputusan pembelian. Electronic City sebagai salah satu perusahaan ritel elektronik modern terbesar di Indonesia, menghadapi tantangan dari maraknya e-commerce dan marketplace dengan harga yang lebih kompetitif. Untuk menjawab tantangan tersebut, Electronic City menerapkan strategi *omnichannel* melalui kombinasi toko fisik dan kanal digital, didukung oleh berbagai bentuk komunikasi persuasif, seperti layanan konsultasi produk, kampanye "belanja aman dari rumah", serta promosi cicilan 0%. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji peran komunikasi persuasif Electronic City dalam meningkatkan penjualan, dengan fokus



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pada cabang Kota Kasablanka. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah kualitatif deskriptif dengan pendekatan studi kasus. Data diperoleh melalui wawancara, observasi, serta dokumentasi terkait strategi komunikasi Electronic City. Hasil penelitian diharapkan memberikan kontribusi teoretis terhadap kajian komunikasi pemasaran, serta rekomendasi praktis bagi pelaku ritel dalam merancang strategi komunikasi persuasif yang efektif pada era digital.

**Kata kunci:** Komunikasi Persuasif, Strategi Komunikasi, Ritel Elektronik

## I. INTRODUCTION

The retail industry is a crucial sector in the Indonesian economy, contributing significantly to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth. Over time, consumer behavior has shifted, marked by increasing demands for convenience, speed, and personalized service. This figure is compounded by the retail sector's layoff rate, which reached 1.4 million in 2020, and the closure of many retail outlets, such as Giant supermarkets and Matahari Department Stores (Fernando, 2025).

This is evidenced by the increase in internet usage in Indonesia, which reached 8.9 percent in the second quarter of 2020, compared to the same period in 2019 (Ludwianto, 2020). One electronics retailer that adapted its business practices to consumers during the pandemic is Hartono Elektronika. Amid the global health crisis and declining purchasing power, Hartono Elektronika adopted an omnichannel approach to its business practices, including through the My Hartono app (Rahayu, 2019).

This was further supported by the company's focus on offering promotions for products that support home activities, such as fans, air purifiers, rice cookers, and other home hygiene products—in line with the trend of increased spending on household necessities and a healthy lifestyle during the quarantine period (Mayasari, 2020).

This campaign was actively conducted using the official Instagram social media platform @electroniccityid, including maximizing sales through the official eci.id app. It aimed not only to build awareness but also to revitalize consumer trust in the brand as a provider of modern household solutions during difficult times (Gozal, 2020).

In everyday life, humans engage in communication to achieve a desired goal. Persuasive communication, as a process, is an attempt to influence the attitudes, opinions, thoughts, and behavior of others without coercion. Theoretically, persuasion is a complex communication process carried out by individuals or groups to elicit a specific response, both verbally and nonverbally (Afiati, 2015).

Persuasive communication itself is a form of communication that aims to influence the attitudes, views, or behavior of an audience through argumentative, emotional, or symbolic approaches. In the context of the retail industry, persuasive communication is reflected in various forms—from advertising and promotions to personal selling and even digital interactions via social media. This strategy can strengthen a brand's position amidst increasingly fierce competition, from modern retail and e-commerce to minimarkets and traditional retailers.

The retail industry is a sector that plays a strategic role in Indonesia's economic growth. Data from the Indonesian Retail Entrepreneurs Association (APRINDO) indicates that the retail sector's contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) will reach more than 10% by 2024, with annual growth of around 4–6% depending on market dynamics and fiscal policy. This growth is supported by high consumer demand, urbanization, and the development of digital technology, which is changing people's shopping behavior (Pahlevi, 2024).

Electronic City, as one of the largest modern electronics retailers in Indonesia, faces significant challenges from the rise of e-commerce and marketplaces offering more competitive prices.

One of Electronic City's branches in Kota Kasablanka serves as a prime example of this strategy. By offering a modern, comfortable store concept and in-person product consultation services, Electronic City strives to create a compelling and memorable shopping experience.

Electronic City actively builds communication through approaches such as the "Smart Shopping Experience," in-person product consultation services, and various seasonal promotions. The company offers not only products but also experiences and added value. Persuasive campaigns such as 0% installments, official warranties, and product bundling programs serve as a way to attract attention and influence purchasing decisions.

Given the importance of communication in supporting sales performance and customer loyalty in the electronics retail sector, and the lack of academic research on the role of persuasive communication, this study will examine how Electronic City's persuasive communication increases sales (a case study of the Kota Kasablanka branch).

Based on the above description, the author is interested in developing a research title entitled "The Role of Electronic City's Persuasive Communication in Increasing Sales: A Case Study of the Kota Kasablanka Branch."

## II. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed qualitative research methods. This qualitative approach will help researchers develop a deep understanding of the research context and provide useful insights for addressing this issue (Lewis, 2015).

Qualitative methods are an effective means of understanding the complexity and diversity of issues involved in research. Researchers used observation and in-depth interviews to collect data for this qualitative study. Researchers can delve deeper into the phenomenon and its background when using qualitative techniques (Haryono 2020).

## III. RESEARCH RESULTS

The analysis was conducted using field results based on Charles U. Larson's (2013) persuasive communication theory, which emphasizes the importance of using ethos (credibility), logos (logic), and pathos (emotion) in communication aimed at influencing others.

### 1. Implementing Ethos to Build Sales Credibility

At Electronic City Kota Kasablanka, this ethos is evident in the quality of service provided by sales staff. They are regularly trained by trainers to thoroughly understand the product, be able to answer technical customer questions, and demonstrate a professional and trustworthy attitude.

By possessing credibility, sales staff are able to form a positive impression from the outset and create a strong foundation for subsequent persuasion. This aligns with Larson's idea that ethos is the primary determinant of whether a communicator's message will be accepted or rejected.

### 2. Implementing Logos to Convey Information Based on Logic

Logos, in Larson's theory, refers to the use of data, logistical arguments, and facts to persuade an audience. This element is also evident in the persuasive communication practices at Electronic City Kota Kasablanka. This approach is important because today's customers tend to be critical and rational in their decision-making. They don't just rely on product appearance, but also consider its utility and efficiency. As Larson explains, messages that incorporate logistical reasoning will increase the likelihood of being accepted by audiences with an analytical mindset.

### 3. Applying Pathos to Evoke an Emotional Response

Pathos, or the use of emotion in the persuasion process, is also effectively utilized by Electronic City employees. They don't just use formal selling language but also strive to understand customers' emotional needs and lifestyles.

Pathos is also used by creating a comfortable atmosphere during the purchasing process, such as by smiling, using friendly body language, and using the customer's name to build familiarity. This strategy makes customers feel valued and more receptive to suggestions.

Larson emphasizes that the use of emotion in communication must be ethical and non-manipulative. In practice, Electronic City staff use pathos not to deceive, but to create a positive emotional connection, so customers feel confident in making decisions.

### 4. Appealing Power of the Communicator (Consumer)

5. The communicator's appeal is not only physical, but also through their silence and interaction. Sales Promotion in this store employs a personal approach, such as greeting customers in a friendly manner, smiling, using open body language, and actively listening. This creates a positive impression and increases consumer comfort during interactions. According to Larson, an attractive communicator will more easily influence others. Consumers feel they are not just being "sold" a product, but are receiving help and guidance in selecting the best product.

### 6. Consistency of Implementation and Repetition: Consistency and Intensification of Messages

Electronic City implements persuasive communication not only through face-to-face interactions, but also through visual and digital media. The same information is displayed consistently through:

- In-store banners and catalogs
- Promotional videos on LED displays
- Instagram feeds and stories
- WhatsApp broadcasts to repeat customers

Repetition of the same message, such as weekend promotions or product bundles, makes it easier for consumers to remember and encourages them to purchase. This strategy supports Larson's idea that consistency and consistency strengthen the message in the audience's mind. What is interesting from the results in the field is how the five elements of

ethos, logos, and pathos, the appeal and consistency of the repetition of the message do not stand alone, but complement each other in the persuasive communication process that is applied.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research conducted through a qualitative approach and in-depth interviews with three key informants (Store Manager, Trainer, and Sales Promotion) at the Electronic City Kota Kasablanka Branch, the researchers concluded the following key points:

1. Persuasive communication is a key strategy for increasing sales. Every line of work, from management to the promotions team, actively uses a persuasive communication approach to build strong relationships with customers and foster trust in products and services.
2. The Store Manager acts as a communication strategy director by emphasizing credibility (ethos) in every interaction with his team. Emphasis on professionalism, product mastery, and consistent service are part of the effort to build customer trust.
3. Trainers play a role in developing the sales team's persuasive communication skills through training that combines logic (logos) and emotion (pathos). Trainers not only provide technical knowledge but also encourage staff to deliver logical messages while engaging customers' emotional selves.
4. Sales Promotion plays a key role in directing persuasive communication with customers. They employ an adaptive, friendly, and personalized approach. The communicator's appeal and the use of techniques such as storytelling and suggestive selling have proven effective in encouraging customers to make purchases.
5. This research aligns with Charles U. Larson's persuasive communication theory, which explains that persuasion success is influenced by the communicator's credibility (ethos), use of logic (logos), emotional influence (pathos), the communicator's appeal, and a message delivery strategy that aligns with the audience's characteristics.

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