

Abstract

This descriptive case study examines the public relations strategy implemented and the type of rebranding during the rebranding of Neo Awana Hotel Yogyakarta to Alana Malioboro. This study aims to understand better how public relations professionals navigate the complex process of rebranding a hospitality business and how they communicate the changes to different stakeholders. This study uses a qualitative approach with semi-structured interviews and vital public relations team members to explore the strategic decision-making process that informed the rebranding campaign. Using a theoretical model from Cutlip (2006) regarding the steps taken before determining a public relations strategy, followed by the PENCIL concept from Nova (2011) to analyze the public relations strategy, followed by a theoretical model to find out the steps to go through for rebranding from Muzellec (2006), and finally, the author uses the latest theory regarding rebranding by Singh & Gupta (2021) to draw conclusions about what rebranding The Alana has gone through. The discussions also shed light on the tactics used to engage with different audiences, including customers, travel industry influencers, and the local community. The findings reveal that this rebranding was a proactive rebranding planned to reach a higher market. The public relations strategy in its rebranding was a public relations mix focused on social media marketing. Moreover, the success of its rebranding was due to a well-coordinated effort that leveraged multiple channels and tactics to reach different stakeholders conducted by the public relations practitioner. The public relations team was critical in developing key messages that resonated with the target audience and effectively communicated the new brand identity. The study also highlights the challenges faced during rebranding, such as managing expectations and addressing negative feedback. However, by utilizing effective communication strategies and building relationships with key stakeholders, the public relations team overcame these challenges and rebranded the hotel. Overall, this study provides valuable insights into the public relations strategy used in rebranding a hospitality business and sheds light on the importance of effective communication in building brand reputation and customer loyalty.

Keywords: Public Relations Strategy, Rebranding, Proactive Rebranding