

Marketing Communication Plan of Mega Star Event Planner Innovation to Survive During and Post-Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

The pandemic situation that has been ongoing from March 2020 to 2021 has plunged the event industry. This is also felt by the Mega Star Event Planner business that offers event planning services. The right strategy is needed to survive and sustain its business during and after a pandemic. Therefore, the Mega Star Event Planner will innovate by developing their product, which is to create an event package with the COVID-19 protocol starting from swab tests and strict procedure in physical distancing. This marketing communication plan that was created to market the results of this innovation was made using the SOSTAC method developed by PR Smith. This plan is entitled Marketing Communication Plan of the Mega Star Event Planner Innovation Results with the aim of Mega Star Event Planner business surviving during and after the pandemic.

Keywords: marketing; communication; plan; IMC; SOSTAC

Perencanaan Komunikasi Pemasaran Mega Star Event Planner untuk Bertahan Selama dan Pasca-Pandemi

ABSTRAK

Situasi pandemi yang terjadi sejak Maret 2020 telah membuat industri *event* terpuruk. Hal ini pun dirasakan oleh bisnis Mega Star Event Planner yang menawarkan jasa *event organizer* sehingga membuat mereka harus mengkaji ulang bisnisnya dan membuat strategi untuk bertahan selama pandemi, agar mampu bertumbuh kembali setelah pandemi berakhir. Mega Star Event Planner kemudian melakukan pengembangan produk yaitu dengan menciptakan paket *event* dengan protokol kesehatan yang secara rinci mencakup semua pencegahan penularan COVID-19 yang mungkin terjadi saat penyelenggaraan *event* yang bernama "*Mega Star Event Protection*". Perencanaan komunikasi pemasaran untuk memasarkan hasil pengembangan produk tersebut dibuat menggunakan *Integrated Marketing Communication* (IMC) yang menggabungkan peranti komunikasi pemasaran offline dan online. Perencanaan tersebut disusun dengan menggunakan metode *sostac* yang dikemukakan oleh PR Smith.

Kata Kunci: perencanaan; komunikasi; pemasaran; IMC; SOSTAC

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The pandemic period has hit the MICE industry in Indonesia. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a strong impact on adjustments in the organization of international meetings, such as cancellations, postponements, changes in location, and so on. Asia Pacific is listed as the most affected region (Kemenparekraf RI, 2020).

Based on data from the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA), there was an adjustment to 48 percent of meetings or to 1,749 international meetings held during the period from February to June 2020. Meanwhile, based on data from IVENDO, it was stated that in Indonesia there had been 96.4 percent delays and 84.8 percent. percent of event cancellations in 17 provinces. The estimated loss from 1,218 organizers throughout Indonesia is 2.7 to Rp 6.9 trillion, which also affects a total of 90,000 workers (Kemenparekraf RI, 2020). Mega Star Event Planner is one of the many business entities that are feeling the impact of this pandemic situation. This business entity which is engaged in event organizer services was established in 2018 and offers various services such as event planning, party decorations, host of events (MC), photo and video documentation, and catering. Event planning includes small events such as birthdays, anniversaries or baby showers, to large events such as weddings and corporate events such as meetings, seminars, and gatherings (Mega Star Event Planner-Jakarta, n.d).

During the pandemic, Mega Star Event Planner experienced a large number of order cancellations, both decoration orders and event planning. This causes the Mega Star Event Planner's turnover to decrease by up to 80%. In addition, there has been a reduction in the part-time staff normally employed by Mega Star Event Planners. In an effort to overcome the decline in the event industry, virtual events such as web seminars or what are commonly called webinars were born. This virtual activity is one solution so that you can still carry out activities that involve many people without having to meet physically. Recently, the webinar trend that is currently on the rise can be seen from the large number of webinar posters appearing on social media and presenting various interesting and high-quality themes. With a variety of goals, both for the general and professional domains, both on a local, national and international scale. In view of this phenomenon, Razaq (2020) reveals that virtual activities are not only a substitute for physical conferences, but also as a marketing strategy to promote certain brands or products.

Based on data from The Motley Fool (2020), since the pandemic began, the number of users of the Zoom virtual meeting application has jumped to more than 200 million. This figure shows that there is a drastic increase, which is as much as 21% compared to 2019 (Prasetya, 2020). The concept of virtual events itself is increasingly loved by many people, not only individuals but also large companies. Like the Groovy Event Organizer, which has officially launched the latest virtual event concept service. Ferdinand Ryan Eka Prasetyo as CEO of the Groovy Event Organizer revealed that he as one of the event sector business activists did this to adapt and deal with the pandemic situation, as well as a solution so that client needs are met and the event industry can continue to move smoothly (Supriadi, 2020).

Seeing this trend, the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (2020) also facilitates virtual event business training for event industry players consisting of 104 visitors to attend training in order to capture opportunities that arise during the new normal transition period. The training in collaboration with the Australian Marketing Institute (AMI) will take place from 6 to 20 May 2020. This training consists of two main activities, namely webinar sessions and working on virtual events projects in real terms.

Based on this trend, Mega Star Event Planner had thought to switch focus to virtual events. Mega Star Event Planner is aware that as one of the event business players who are slumped during the pandemic, Mega Star Event Planner must make a strategy to survive. Therefore, Mega Star Event Planner will make marketing communication plans by maximizing the resources they have and using the right promotion tools with the aim of maintaining their business during and after the pandemic.

METHOD

SOSTAC is a simple method proposed by PR Smith in 1998 to help marketing managers remember the main components of planning marketing communications. SOSTAC can be applied to various corporate planning, marketing planning, marketing communication planning, social media planning, direct mail planning or even personal planning SOSTAC consists of Situation Analysis (where are we now?), Objectives (where are we going?), Strategy (how do we get there?), Tactic (details of strategy), Action (implementation – executing the plan), Control (measurement, monitoring, reviewing, and modifying) (Smith & Zook, 2011, p. 226).

Departing from the current pandemic situation that is being experienced by Mega Star Event Planner and the purpose of this communication plan, Mega Star Event Planner will use SOSTAC as a system of marketing communication planning in innovating to survive during and post-pandemic.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the analysis of strengths and opportunities, as well as the current pandemic situation, Mega Star Event Planner develops SOSTAC planning tactics using the 7P marketing mix, namely Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence to maintain business continuity. during and after the pandemic.

Product

The first step for this planning is to develop the services that have been offered by Mega Star Event Planner, namely social event planning services such as birthday parties, engagements, weddings, anniversaries, bridal showers, and gatherings with additional bubble events or extra protection to prevent the spread of COVID. -19.

Therefore, the Mega Star Event Planner created a number of protocols that must be applied for every event held, namely "Mega Star Event Protection" which was adapted from the protocols of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Berlin Department of Tourism in the MICE field regarding organizing events in pandemic period. This protocol will be compiled into a booklet that will be used as a guide for the Mega Star Event Planner team, freelance crew, vendors and partners as well as clients when organizing events. This booklet will be printed or sent online and signed by each party involved in the event, as a guarantee that each party will comply with the protocol and if it violates the cooperation can be canceled.

Table 1. Health Protocol "Mega Star Event Protection"

	Mega Star Event Protection					
1	General					
1.1	Mega Star Event Planner must ensure visitor compliance with hygiene regulations, use of masks and applicable social distancing regulations, as well as health and safety standards for the entire production process and event continuity.					
1.2	People who have a higher risk of contracting COVID-19 (respiratory disease) or have other congenital diseases, are advised not to participate in the event.					
1.3	The entire Mega Star Event Planner team along with vendors and partners involved in the event must notify the visitors and employees concerned specifically and in writing about all the protocols that must be adhered to by all parties involved during the setup, implementation, and demolition phases of the event.					
1.4	In addition, all parties involved in the event must also notify the visitors and employees concerned specifically and in writing about the rules and procedures if there are cases of COVID-19 at the event.					
1.5	Provide information panels regarding event protocols at vital points of event location (entrances and exits, sanitation facilities, and event areas).					
1.6	Provide COVID-19 test facilities a few days before the event and during the event (on-the-spot) for visitors and event crew.					
1.7	Providing hybrid event facilities, namely combining offline and online events (if needed), starting from human resources to equipment.					
2	Hygiene					

- 2.1 Before the event begins, a clear cleaning and disinfection plan should be prepared that identifies which areas should be cleaned, how often, and what cleaning and disinfecting agents will be used. For multi-day events, cleaning and disinfection must be carried out at the end of each event.
- 2.2 All surfaces used by direct hand contact must be disinfected before the event begins (in particular, doorknobs, elevator buttons, tabletops, etc.). Surfaces that are in intensive contact with hands should be disinfected repeatedly over a period of one day.
- 2.3 Floors should be cleaned every working day and cleaned according to the level of dirtiness.
- 2.4 Before starting work, all employees must disinfect their hands. Likewise all event visitors, they must clean or disinfect their hands before entering the event location and during the event.
- 2.5 Disinfectant dispensers must be clearly visible and installed at all event entrances and exits as well as at vital points.
- 2.6 Provide medical mask facilities to anticipate visitors who do not bring and provide other tools to maintain hygiene such as an air purifier (if needed).

3 Event Location

- 3.1 At the event location, there are different social distancing measures for the following areas:
 - Events/social area
 - Traffic areas
 - Special area

Where possible, the event venue will be further divided into areas/zones/rooms to ensure a controlled distribution of visitors. In applying this model, overcrowded areas, queues and high visitor density should be avoided. Here, visitor capacity planning must be pre-arranged (for example, with advance online registration).

3.2 Event/social areas are areas where visitors may stay for longer periods of time so a risk of long-term personal contact must be assumed, such as areas for

events and presentations, catering, and sanitary facilities such as toilets and washbasins.

In this area, measures are needed to ensure a minimum distance of 1.5m between visitors, the maximum number of people does not exceed the specified capacity limit (eg 25% of capacity).

Seating arrangements and aisle widths in the event area must include the necessary spacing between visitors.

Recommended for three square meters per visitor or, in events with fixed row seating, use of every third seat in every second row ('zipper sitting').

In areas where queues may form (eg access to events or catering venues), there are butler/security personnel and distance markers (eg, floor markings, belt barriers) to ensure minimum distances are defined and are kept as far as possible.

Access to sanitation facilities should be controlled by crew with distance markers (eg floor markings or belt barriers) to ensure minimum distances are defined and kept as far as possible. Wherever possible, the number of toilet, urinal and sink users is limited to ensure that the specified minimum distance is maintained.

- 3.3 A traffic area is an event venue area where visitors move to and from various points. For example, corridors, stairs and emergency rescue routes. In this area, the event crew will ask visitors to maintain distance and cleanliness.
- 3.4 Special areas are the entrance area, waiting room and smoking area (if any). Additional measures are required to ensure a minimum distance of 1.5m is maintained at all times. Includes access paths by security guards and/or necessary 'technical' equipment (floor markings, room partitions, automatic gate systems or other pedestrian pathways to control access, lighting systems, etc.).
- 3.5 Performers (MC, moderators, speakers, singers, bands, etc.), must be placed in a separate and marked changing room/room.
- 3.6 Events can only be held where indoor ventilation is adequate. The AC unit must be permanently switched from circulating mode to fresh air mode. To

ensure aerosols are minimized, the room should be opened for thorough ventilation at regular intervals as needed.

4 Visitor

- 4.1 Where possible, visitor invitations/confirmations should be arranged via digital/electronic means for the implementation of contactless access (e.g. using a personalized ticket/ID with a QR code)
- 4.2 Prior to the event, visitor data must be documented by including their first and last name, full address or email address, and telephone number, as well as the time and duration of the person attending and, if applicable, their seat or table number, as well as questions regarding COVID-19 symptoms and history journey.
- 4.3 For more event attendees than expected, individual entry timings should be considered to avoid larger queues at the entrance area.

5 Event Entry and Exit Control

5.1 In order to control the number of people entering and leaving the event, a number of steps must be taken to ensure that the maximum density of people in a given area is never exceeded, by granting access only to authorized and interested persons.

This access restriction system is intended so that the area can be controlled without having to be monitored by crew or security staff.

- 5.2 Where possible, entrances and exits are arranged separately and should be clearly marked.
- 5.3 A number of measures are implemented to ensure the flow of visitors at the entrances and exits within the required distance (floor markings, room partitions, automatic gates or other pedestrian flow control systems, lighting systems, etc.). Traffic lanes are defined and marked to direct the flow of visitors smoothly (If possible a one-way system will be implemented and distanced marked). The flow of people in opposite directions should be avoided.

- 5.4 Queue spaces must have sufficient space for the application of minimum distances and controlled methods of access arrangements (eg control by crew or security personnel).
- 5.5 People with symptoms are not allowed to enter the event location. If someone within the event location develops symptoms, that person must leave the event immediately.

6 Event Production

- 6.1 To facilitate the tracking system in case of transmission, all crew, vendor employees and partners involved must be electronically documented. All relevant data (first and last name, full address or email address, and telephone number) must be included. If required, this data will then be provided exclusively to public health authorities (subject to data privacy provisions).
- 6.2 In order to reduce the number of people working in the event location at the same time, the division of tasks has been arranged for the preparation and demolition stages, divided into smaller work groups for an area and operation, with a set time.
- 6.3 Access to the production area will only be granted to people whose workplaces are located directly there.
- 6.4 All teams and crews involved must wear masks, face shields, and gloves and provide rapid test facilities before and after the event.

7 Technical Equipment

- 7.1 The installation/dismantling of technical equipment and in particular the arrangement of the workplace (control room, followspots, etc.) must be positioned as far as possible in accordance with applicable distance regulations.
- 7.2 If the control room is too small to comply with applicable distance regulations, additional barriers must be installed. Opposite workspaces should be arranged in an offset pattern.
- 7.3 Only accept people who are directly involved in working in the production area during rehearsals and events.

7.4 Personal equipment such as microphones, PPE, walkie-talkies, etc. are only for personal use and not shared with others.

8 Event Schedule and Program

- 8.1 In planning the program design and sequence of events, close contact should be minimized as far as possible (podium, stage artists, etc.). On stage performances and other presentation areas, layouts, seating plans, etc. should be planned as far apart as possible with sufficient space.
- 8.2 Interaction between/with visitors is possible only under the very strict conditions described in the individual hygiene concept. The main focus should be on the event owner (eg bride, birthday, or speaker) rather than interactive engagement.

Screens and devices required to demonstrate equipment should be cleaned and disinfected after use. The current regulations regarding social distancing must be applied at stands (merchandise, sponsors, etc.), stage performances, attractions, and so on.

8.3 Singing together and dancing in an enclosed space is not permitted.

9 Catering

9.1 To avoid the risk of infection from uncovered food, it is best to serve food directly to the table of event participants.

If you have to serve food in a buffet, the food must be portioned and wrapped in plastic and there must be a special officer who ensures that event participants adhere to the minimum required distance from each other, wear masks and wash their hands before taking food. To speed up the serving of food and beverages, they must be clearly and legibly labeled.

Make sure the queues are spaced and don't form a crowd. In addition, valid distance rules must be observed (use floor markings).

- 9.2 If there is a sale of food, the payment system must be non-cash.
- 9.3 To avoid overcrowding of event attendees and staff in one location, decentralized service points should be planned and organized (maximum number of people allowed in the catering area will be determined in advance). As an alternative, food and drinks can be provided in closed packages and

placed on chairs/tables in the event area or through certain forms of presentation (eg placed on trays).

- 9.4 Prevent excessive alcohol consumption of event participants, as this can violate social distancing restrictions. Anyone who is clearly drunk should be warned and, if necessary, escorted out of the event area.
- 9.5 Reusable tableware should in principle be cleaned in a high temperature (>70°C) dishwasher system. Do not wash dishes by hand in the sink (must use gloves). During transport and storage, appropriate packaging should be used to exclude the possibility of contamination.
- 9.6 The following protective equipment should be provided to everyone working in catering services: masks, face shields, disposable gloves, and higher frequency hand disinfection.
- 9.7 All catering area personnel should be regularly instructed on all necessary additional hygiene measures. Regular hand washing and disinfection should be planned and coordinated.
- 9.8 Where required, crews servicing all trades and service providers must follow a phased schedule planned for the available area.

10 Security officer

- 10.1 Security officers must monitor compliance with applicable social distancing regulations in the participant area (if required, with additional mobile patrols), ensure that people do not congregate to form larger crowds in waiting rooms, at break times, in front of sanitation and catering facilities. If there is a crowd, disperse reprimand those who are not wearing masks and then give medical masks to people who do not wear masks / lose their masks.
- 10.2 Wherever possible, entry security processes and procedures are changed to contactless checks (body scanners/metal detectors).
- 10.3 Access to all areas / zones / rooms must be checked by security personnel. If necessary, the crew also helps control the flow of event attendees sitting or leaving their seats.

- 10.4 During event production, crew and security personnel must ensure that no unauthorized persons can enter the event location.
- 10.5 If bag inspection is required, sufficient space should be provided with a separate pedestrian flow system to control access.
- 10.6 The actual inspection process must be done spatially/temporarily. Event attendees must empty their own bags. Security personnel should perform a visual inspection. event participants are responsible for repackaging their goods after inspection and if dangerous goods are found or violate the rules, they must submit the object/bag for safekeeping.
- 10.7 The following protective equipment should be provided to everyone working as security staff: medical masks, disposable gloves, and higher frequency hand disinfection.

11 Handling in case of COVID-19 cases during and after the event

- 11.1 When a positive case occurs during an antigen test before entering the event, visitors will be referred to the nearest laboratory or hospital to perform a PCR test or be followed up by the medical team.
- 11.2 After the event is over, within 1 x 12 hours there are cases of visitors who are positive for COVID-19, so we will inform all visitors who are present and ask them to follow the protocol and be asked to do an independent test.

Source: Mega Star Event Planner, 2020.

In addition to these health protocols, other services that will support the "Mega Star Event Protection" program are a combination of direct and virtual events or what is called a hybrid event. So that although the number of event participants is limited based on a predetermined protocol, event participants who are not present can still participate through online media such as Zoom or Instagram Live.

Price

After making the product "Mega Star Event Protection", Mega Star Event Planner will provide a price range that is tailored to the needs of potential clients. Here are some price packages that will be offered:

No	Package	Price	Facilities
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1.	Bronze Protection	4,000,000 - 8,000,000	 Onsite antigen test for max 20 people. 3 ply mask for max. 20 people. Everyone gets 2 masks. Max. 30 bottles of customized hand sanitizer 60 ml. 2x Disinfectant for room area up to 100m². Customized signage (x-banner) and e- booklets. Crew who have been tested for antigen and trained during duty.
2.	Silver Protection	9,000,000 - 16,000,000	 Onsite antigen test for 21 - 50 people. Max. 4 boxes of 3-ply masks. Max. 100 pieces of face shields. Max. 70 bottles of customized hand sanitizer 60 ml. 2x Disinfectant for a room area of 101-150m². Customized signage (x-banner) and e-booklets. Crew who have been tested for antigen and trained during duty.
3.	Gold Protection	8,500,000 - 25,000,000	 On-site PCR test for max 20 people. 4-ply mask for max. 20 people, each person gets 2 masks. Max. 40 pieces of face shields. Max. 30 bottles of customized hand sanitizer 60 ml. 2x Disinfectant for a room area of 101-150m². Max. 2 pieces of Customized signage (Tripod Banner) and e-booklet Crews who have been tested by PCR and trained while on duty.
5.	Diamond Protection	65,000,000 - 110,000,000	 On-site PCR test for 51-100 people. 4-ply mask for Max. 100 people. Everyone gets 2 masks. Max. 200 pieces of face shields. Max. 150 pieces Customize hand sanitizer 60ml.

	 2x Disinfectant for an area of 151- 500m². Max. 2 pieces of Customized signage (Tripod Banner) and e-booklet Crew who have been tested by PCR and trained while on duty.
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Source: Mega Star Event Planner, 2021

The price package above is a special price for clients who use Mega Star Event Planner services. If there are clients who only want to use event protection services and run with their own party planner or with other event organizers, then the client will be charged an additional five percent fee as a corkage fee.

Place

Mega Star Event Planner has several places in distributing its products, which are as follows: 1. *Website*

The main distribution channel is a website where prospective clients can get detailed information about the services offered by Mega Star Event Planner. The information contained on the website includes company profiles, portfolios, price packages and promos offered as well as articles on tips about organizing events. In addition, a form is also available to contact the sales team with the best offer. The following is a display of the Mega Star website.

2. Social Media

The next distribution channel is Instagram social media which will display portfolios and information about packages and promos from Mega Star Event Planner. Prospective clients can interact directly with the sales team through the direct message feature or call the number listed on the profile.

3. Messenger App

The next distribution channel is the messenger app, namely Whatsapp Business where prospective clients can directly access the Mega Star Event Planner package catalog and interact and make transactions with the sales team.

Promotion

After designing an event package with extra protection, Mega Star Event Planner will then carry out a number of promotional activities using integrated marketing communication (IMC) which will combine advertising, digital marketing, social media, alternative marketing, database marketing, direct marketing, personal selling, sales promotion and public relations in order to support marketing communication activities for product innovation Mega Star Event Planner to achieve the main goal of maintaining its business during and after the pandemic.

The main tool in this activity is the implementation of the "Grand Launching of Mega Star Event Protection" event as an application to carry out various other promotional tools such as

public relations, namely event marketing and media publications, by doing word-of-mouth marketing personal selling carried out by the sales team during the event. take place, as well as become promotional materials that will be used as digital marketing content, social media marketing and direct marketing.

CONCLUSION

Event industry players are experiencing a slump due to the COVID-19 pandemic that has hit the whole world. To maintain its business continuity during and after the pandemic, Mega Star Event Planner innovates its product development, namely by creating the "Mega Star Event Protection" program in the form of event planning with the COVID-19 protocol that is aligned with making marketing communication plans with the SOSTAC method in communicating the results of these innovations. The planning includes situation analysis using the SWOT and STEEPLE methods, then determining objectives using the SMART method, strategy using push and pull marketing, tactics using the 7P marketing mix method, then action by creating an action plan table, and control using the Macro Model method. of Evaluation (Macnamara, n.d).

The recommendation for the Mega Star Event Planner in carrying out this marketing communication plan is to pay close attention to the development of the COVID-19 pandemic situation. Can it be projected that this pandemic will be over in the next two to three years or not? Because of course this will have a huge impact on the product being developed, namely "Mega Star Event Protection" which is only relevant during the pandemic. If indeed this pandemic situation has not ended, then this "Mega Star Event Protection" program can continue to be run and developed and marketed by adjusting to the latest trends. In addition, Mega Star Event Planner must think about the possibility if the product "Mega Star Event Planner" is not in demand by its target market. Meanwhile, if in the short term the pandemic is over, then the "Mega Star Event Protection" program will become irrelevant. However, this can be a unique selling point for Mega Star Event Planner's brand image as an event organizer that is responsive, safe and hygienic in organizing events.

Regardless of the end of the pandemic or not, it is important to know that human habits have changed since the pandemic, or what is known as the 'new normal' situation. Not only from changes in the way of shopping and transactions that are all digital, but the virtual event trend is getting stronger and supported by rapidly developing technology. Even though humans used to feel uncomfortable with digital activities, now they are getting used to it and are comfortable.

Global events in the MICE field, which have been held offline so far, have started to be regularly held online and have begun to get enthusiasm from the public. Virtual weddings are also an option for couples who want to get married and want to invite participants in long distance events or want to save costs. Therefore, Mega Star Event Protection also needs to thoroughly explore the implementation of virtual events in order to maintain long-term business continuity in this event industry.

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