

The Use of Crisis Communication Strategies by Erigo in Emergency Management and Plagiarism Issues

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Abstract

Introduction: Erigo serves as a compelling research subject due to its recent reputation crisis from plagiarism allegations, illustrating how companies can face significant brand challenges. Its application of Image Repair Theory offers insights into effective crisis communication strategies, while the role of social media highlights the dynamics of public perception. Analyzing Erigo's experience provides valuable lessons for other brands facing similar ethical issues.

Methods: This study takes a descriptive qualitative method. Using the case study method. The data source used includes data analysis from several social media platforms, including Instagram and Twitter. In addition, this study draws on data from earlier research.

Findings: Erigo used one of Image Repair Theory's tactics to deal with his reputation crisis: the mortification strategy. Mortification is an approach that involves accepting responsibility for the objectionable action/event, apologizing, and asking for forgiveness. Expressions of remorse are also included in this category. Erigo demonstrated this by apologizing to both the public and the illustrator concerned.

Originality: This study becomes novelty because there has been no previous research that discusses how Erigo's crisis communication strategy deals with this problem. Previous research has also focused more on customer experience and customer brand trust in the Erigo fashion brand.

Keywords: Crisis Communication, Social Media, Brand Management, Image Repair Theory, Public Relations.

Introduction

Globalization is a complicated and ubiquitous phenomenon that has gained tremendous traction in contemporary culture. Globalization, defined as a process of development or change that crosses national borders, has an impact on a wide range of human activities, including the economic, social, technological, and cultural realms (Haupt, 2021). Globalization improves international trade, investment, and market integration, resulting in greater economic interdependence between nations. Socially, it promotes the exchange of ideas, beliefs, and cultural practices, resulting in increased understanding and cooperation among varied groups (L. Wang et al., 2021).

Globalization accelerates the spread of inventions and technical developments

around the world, resulting in faster progress and greater connection. Culturally, it encourages the integration and appreciation of many cultural traditions, resulting in a more integrated and culturally rich global community (Pang et al., 2021). The term ‘globalization’ is formed from the words ‘global,’ which means the entire world, and ‘ization,’ which means a continuing process, stressing globalization’s constant and dynamic role in changing and remaking the global environment. This multidimensional phenomenon thus plays an important part in our world’s continuing evolution, affecting multiple industries and contributing to societal interconnection (Claeys & Coombs, 2020).

Globalization signifies the interconnectedness of nations and societies through various channels, primarily driven by advancements in information technology and communication (Limbong et al., 2020). Advances in information technology are a major driver of globalization. The rapid expansion of the internet has resulted in the creation of a virtual environment that connects people from all over the world. This connectedness enables the immediate sharing of information, ideas, and inventions, effectively shortening distances and facilitating global contacts (Wen et al., 2021). The internet has become an important instrument in the globalization process, allowing individuals all over the world to communicate and collaborate in real time.

The capacity to communicate knowledge and cultural traditions instantly has expedited economic growth and technical progress while also promoting a better understanding and appreciation of different cultures (Kim & Lim, 2020). This technological integration has reshaped industries, education, and social dynamics, leaving the world more interconnected and interdependent than ever. The profound impact of information technology on globalization underscores its significance in transforming how societies interact and evolve on a global scale.

The spread of knowledge and technology has substantially altered the global innovation scene, encouraging productivity-enhancing technology transfer and international collaboration (Carbon et al., 2022). This interchange promotes the spread of cutting-edge ideas and best practices, allowing countries to embrace and adapt new technology more efficiently (Lovari & Bowen, 2019). As a result, international collaboration in research and development has increased, resulting in achievements that would not have been possible alone. This dynamic has accelerated economic growth, enhanced competitiveness, and created a more integrated and innovative global economy. The widespread dissemination of technological advancements emphasizes the importance of international collaboration in accelerating progress and increasing productivity around the world (Roy et al., 2020).

Media development is another significant impact of globalization. Traditional forms of media have undergone a profound transformation, evolving into digital platforms that facilitate global communication and information sharing. This shift not only broadens access to diverse viewpoints but also plays a crucial role in shaping cultural exchanges and influencing social dynamics across regions (Snoussi, 2020). The internet has become a powerful tool for the rapid dissemination of information, enabling individuals worldwide to stay informed and connected in real-time. It has contributed to the rise of a more knowledgeable and engaged global citizenry, where people can engage in informed discussions, share experiences, and participate in global conversations (Zheng, 2023).

Globalization has also spurred an increase in foreign direct investment (FDI) and trade, fostering a more interconnected global economy. This interconnectedness allows

businesses to diversify their operations on a global scale, optimize production processes, and expand their reach across borders (Marsen, 2019). International collaboration has become essential for business strategies, enabling companies to tap into new markets, access resources, and innovate more efficiently. The combination of media advancements and economic shifts driven by globalization has reshaped how information flows across borders and transformed global business practices (Singh et al., 2020). These changes have led to the emergence of a globalized marketplace marked by enhanced communication, interconnected industries, and greater economic collaboration among nations.

Media development is crucial to globalization, generating significant changes in how information is exchanged and consumed around the world. Traditional media has developed into digital platforms that allow for real-time communication across national borders (Kaufhold et al., 2020). This move broadens access to multiple perspectives and enables people from different places to share ideas, cultural practices, and experiences (Krishnan et al., 2022). Social media, news websites, and streaming services have all changed the way people acquire information and enable cross-cultural conversation.

The internet has emerged as a crucial instrument for quick information dissemination, providing real-time updates on global events and trends. This increased access to a variety of information sources has helped to the growth of a more educated and active global population. People are becoming more conscious of global issues like political movements and environmental concerns, and they are capable of participating in worldwide debates and activism (Silviani et al., 2022). Furthermore, digital media promotes cultural exchange by allowing individuals to communicate their customs, values, and languages with people from all backgrounds.

Globalization has also resulted in increasing foreign direct investment (FDI) and commerce, contributing to a more linked global economy. Businesses can diversify their operations, get access to resources, and optimize manufacturing processes by collaborating internationally (Eriksson, 2018). Companies that engage with global supply chains and form cross-border collaborations to better products and services benefit from increased efficiency, innovation, and competition. The growth of foreign corporate activities and market diversification reflects the changing nature of global trade (Y. Wang & Dong, 2017).

These advancements in communication, information diffusion, and economic partnership demonstrate the vast implications of globalization. As communication networks become more integrated and commercial operations become more intertwined, the global landscape changes the way knowledge is communicated, cultures interact, and economies function (Austin & Jin, 2016). These transformations continue to impact global dynamics, influencing cultural perceptions, economic tactics, and international political ties.

Despite its many benefits, globalization poses various complicated challenges that must be handled. One of the main problems is the uneven distribution of its benefits, which has caused great frustration in some areas (Roshan et al., 2016). This discrepancy emphasizes important topics like economic inequality and cultural homogenization. While globalization might boost efficiency and productivity, it does not ensure that all individuals, communities, or countries gain equally. The gap between wealthy and developing countries has widened in some circumstances, with the most prosperous economies collecting the majority of the benefits while others struggle to catch up (Kaszás & Keller, 2023). Moreover, the spread of global culture and values, which are frequently

dominated by powerful nations, has contributed to the decline of local traditions, identities, and cultural diversity.

To fully realize the benefits of globalization, governments must create conditions that encourage innovation, growth, and inclusivity while also addressing local needs and priorities. This entails developing policies that promote technical innovation and economic development while ensuring that the advantages are dispersed more equally. To assist excluded communities in participating in the global economy, governments must also prioritize improving social safety nets and investing in education, skill development, and infrastructure (Coombs & Tachkova, 2023).

In simple terms, globalization is an inescapable and ever-present force that shapes modern society through technological breakthroughs, increased connectedness, and a quick flow of ideas and resources (Cheng, 2016). While it provides great opportunity for growth and development, it necessitates careful management to address its inherent problems. This includes tackling inequalities, safeguarding cultural variety, and ensuring that the advantages of globalization are distributed more equally (Langaro et al., 2024). Embracing these opportunities, combined with a thoughtful approach to sustainable development, is critical to ensure that globalization contributes positively to the future of societies around the world (Talawanich & Pongwat, 2024).

Science and technology advancements, particularly breakthroughs such as the internet and social media, have had a significant and far-reaching impact on many facets of human life. These improvements have an impact not only on individuals' everyday routines but also on the operations and tactics of professional fields across industries, one of the most important being crisis communication (Zhong et al., 2024). Social media plays a significant role in shaping how individuals interact, communicate, and share ideas, particularly during crises. It provides a platform for individuals, organizations, and governments to exchange information, discuss events, and address emerging issues in a swift and accessible manner (Mani et al., 2021). Crises are inherently boundaryless, meaning they can impact organizations of all sizes, from small businesses to large corporations. Such events can occur at any time and in any location, whether they are foreseen or unexpected (Han & Baird, 2022).

When a crisis happens, organizations must respond quickly and efficiently to limit damage, safeguard their reputation, and maintain stakeholder trust (Fan et al., 2024). In this environment, the Public Relations (PR) and Corporate Communication departments play key roles in handling the issue. Public relations professionals are responsible for creating and implementing communication strategies that handle the issue, offer timely and correct information, and engage with the public and media to clarify the organization's viewpoint (Waseem & Kamal, 2024). Because of their potential to quickly communicate information to a large audience, stimulate direct contact with stakeholders, and help manage public perception, social media platforms in particular have emerged as critical instruments in crisis communication.

Other than that, the importance of public relations in crisis communication extends beyond reactive measures to include proactive planning. Organizations must prepare for potential emergencies by creating thorough communication plans that detail reaction strategies, critical messaging, and techniques for connecting with various audiences (Adekugbe & Ibeh, 2024). The timeliness and transparency of the reaction are critical in limiting the crisis's impact and establishing the organization's reputation as responsible and trustworthy. In the digital age, where information spreads rapidly and frequently without control, good crisis communication via social media and other platforms can have

a big impact on how an organization is regarded and the result of the issue (Hall et al., 2024).

Consequently, the interaction between technology improvements, communication, and crisis management is still evolving, highlighting the growing importance of digital media in crisis management and response. The ability to communicate quickly, clearly, and effectively in such situations has become a vital factor in an organization's resilience and long-term reputation (Lastres et al., 2024).

The advancement of science and technology, particularly with the introduction of the internet and social media, has had a significant and far-reaching impact on many parts of life. These innovations have revolutionized not just people's daily lives, but also the dynamics of professional activity in a variety of fields, including crisis communication (Iqbal et al., 2023). Social media platforms have evolved into indispensable instruments for modern communication, fundamentally affecting how people connect, communicate, and exchange ideas, particularly during times of crisis. They enable the rapid and widespread dissemination of information, as well as real-time conversations, updates, and responses to emerging events (Srivastava et al., 2024). In times of crisis, social media plays an important role in informing the public and facilitating dialogue, both of which are necessary for effective crisis management.

Crises are naturally unpredictable and can strike at any time, affecting organizations of all kinds, from tiny firms to major multinationals. Unlike other difficulties that can be contained or localized, crises have no bounds and can strike at any time and from any area (Barberá et al., 2022). Organizations must be prepared for a number of events, including natural disasters, financial setbacks, and public relations challenges, due to their unpredictability. When a crisis strikes, the role of public relations (or business communication) becomes important. Public relations experts are in charge of regulating the flow of information, fostering trust, and guaranteeing clear communication within and beyond the company (Rubio & Carbonell, 2022). Their work goes beyond merely addressing the immediate crisis and includes efforts to restore the organization's reputation and credibility over time.

In such cases, public relations methods play an important role in framing the narrative, giving factual information, and offering solutions that demonstrate accountability and dedication (Skogerbø et al., 2024). Effective crisis communication necessitates careful planning, swift decision-making, and a thorough awareness of the media ecosystem, including social media, to ensure messages are appropriately transmitted and the organization is able to manage the crisis with little damage. The expanding use of technology in crisis management emphasizes the need of including digital communication tools into crisis plans, allowing organisations to respond quickly and effectively to rapidly changing events (Lamsal et al., 2024).

One of the significant challenges that fashion brands frequently face is plagiarism, a problem that has become more prevalent with the rise of digital platforms. With the development of the internet, illustrators and designers now have easy access to a vast array of resources and tools that help them create their work. The internet also serves as a platform where illustrators can publish their creations, making their work publicly available to a global audience (Park et al., 2020). This easy access to others' work, however, can lead to unintentional or intentional plagiarism. Illustrators can often find themselves influenced by the works of others, and in some cases, may unknowingly or deliberately reproduce designs or ideas without proper attribution (Casey et al., 2023).

The act of plagiarism can occur when an illustrator or designer modifies or imitates

someone else's work without seeking permission or providing credit to the original creator (Youn et al., 2024). This can lead to significant ethical concerns, particularly in the fashion industry, where intellectual property and originality are vital. The ease with which designs can be copied and shared on the internet makes it difficult for original creators to protect their intellectual property rights (Ryu, 2024). In many cases, the copying of designs is done in such a way that it becomes difficult to trace the origin of the idea, leaving the original creator's contributions unacknowledged (Aassve et al., 2023).

Plagiarism in this context is not limited to direct copying but can also involve the appropriation of ideas, concepts, or visual styles without giving credit to the source. This undermines the value of original work and can result in the false assumption that the copied design or concept is the creator's own (Ruonan et al., 2024). Fashion brands and illustrators alike must address this issue by fostering a culture of respect for intellectual property, ensuring that proper credit is given, and taking steps to prevent unauthorized use of their work (Costa & Azevedo, 2023). As digital platforms continue to grow, the challenge of plagiarism in the fashion industry will require ongoing attention and solutions to maintain fairness and creativity in the field (Cun, 2024).

Erigo, a prominent Indonesian fashion brand, recently became embroiled in controversy due to allegations of design plagiarism. The issue surfaced when Polish artist Nora Potwora accused Erigo of using her artwork without permission for their Sukajan jacket collection (Prabowo & Komaladewi, 2024). This claim gained widespread attention on social media, where it sparked heated debates about intellectual property rights in the fashion industry. In response to the growing backlash, Erigo took swift action by canceling the jacket's sale, issuing a public apology, and compensating Potwora for the infringement (Firdaus et al., 2024). Despite the resolution, this incident highlights a broader issue of plagiarism that continues to affect the fashion industry, as many brands face similar accusations.

Erigo's case is not isolated; other well-known brands have also been criticized for plagiarizing designs. For example, Zalora, a popular online fashion retailer, has been accused of selling items that closely resemble designs created by independent designers without providing proper attribution (Zappelin et al., 2024). These accusations raise concerns about the ethics of sourcing designs and the protection of intellectual property in the fast-evolving fashion landscape. Similarly, global fast-fashion giant H&M has faced multiple lawsuits for allegedly copying designs from smaller brands and independent artists. These legal battles have not only resulted in financial settlements but also generated significant public backlash, damaging the brand's reputation and raising awareness about the importance of respecting original creativity (Saputra & Santoso, 2024).

In addition to H&M, Forever 21 has also been the subject of numerous allegations of design theft. The brand has been accused of replicating styles from high-end designers as well as independent creators, often producing mass-market versions of exclusive designs without permission (Novelayanti et al., 2024). These incidents have led to a growing call for greater accountability in the fashion industry, especially as the lines between inspiration and imitation become increasingly blurred. The widespread occurrence of design plagiarism among established fashion brands highlights the need for stronger enforcement of intellectual property rights, more transparent business practices, and greater respect for the work of independent designers and artists (Puspitasari et al., 2024). As the industry continues to evolve, addressing these issues is essential to fostering

a more equitable and creative environment for all stakeholders.

These cases represent a larger trend in the fashion business, where plagiarism 'Jeopardizes' brand integrity and can severely harm reputations. Plagiarism is not an isolated issue; it is part of a complicated web of challenges confronting the industry. In addition to intellectual property difficulties, the fashion industry is becoming more concerned with sustainability (Al Zhavira et al., 2024). The environmental impact of fast fashion has become a major issue, putting pressure on firms to adopt more environmentally responsible processes. As customer awareness of the environmental costs of mass production and waste grows, firms are being compelled to rethink their processes and commit to more sustainable options (Xu et al., 2024).

Labor rights breaches continue to plague the sector, with numerous reports of bad working conditions and unjust wages in garment factories around the world. These situations have generated global movements calling for more ethical labor practices and improved worker care (Sudirjo et al., 2024). Brands that fail to address these concerns risk receiving public criticism and losing consumer trust. The ethical responsibility to ensure equitable treatment of workers has become just as crucial as product quality in sustaining a brand's image.

Market saturation has also become a more difficult task for businesses, particularly with the rise of e-commerce and social media. The internet age has made it easier for consumers to access a diverse choice of companies, resulting in fierce rivalry. As a result, distinguishing oneself in a crowded market is getting increasingly challenging, necessitating the development of novel differentiation strategies. This issue is exacerbated by the development of influencers and trends on social media, which can swiftly modify consumer preferences, making it difficult for businesses to retain a consistent and distinct identity (Putra et al., 2024).

Intellectual property considerations, as evidenced in cases like Erigo, complicate matters even more. Brands frequently struggle to retain their intellectual property rights, making creative design protection a critical concern. Disputes over originality and ownership are widespread, as designs are regularly copied or modified without authorization (Ilmi et al., 2024). This constant dispute over intellectual property has a negative impact on brand financial stability along with the value of creativity and uniqueness in the fashion industry.

To summarize, while the recent Erigo plagiarism incident is noteworthy, it is only one aspect of a larger set of challenges that both established and young brands face. These concerns, which range from design integrity and intellectual property protection to sustainability and labor rights, are inextricably linked and necessitate comprehensive answers. Addressing these concerns is critical not only for retaining consumer trust but also for creating a more ethical, ecological, and respectful creative environment (Hariyadi et al., 2024). As the fashion industry evolves, responsible practices and innovation will be critical to guaranteeing long-term success and credibility in an increasingly complex global marketplace.

Erigo is a fashion brand founded by Muhammad Sadad, who currently serves as the CEO of the company. Established in 2013, Erigo has grown to become a notable player in the casual fashion market, offering clothing that is designed for everyday wear. The brand's identity has remained consistent over the years, with an emphasis on versatile, comfortable, and stylish apparel that caters to a broad audience. Sadad's decision to adopt this brand identity stemmed from his recognition of the rapidly shifting fashion trends and the increasing competition in the market. By positioning Erigo as a brand that reflects

current trends while maintaining practicality, Sadad aimed to differentiate the brand and ensure its relevance in an ever-evolving industry (Sirojuddin et al., 2024).

In the same year of its founding, Erigo launched an online webstore, marking the beginning of its digital presence. This strategic move allowed the brand to reach a broader audience and tap into the growing trend of online shopping. In addition to its online efforts, Erigo also sought to expand its market reach through participation in various offline events, with one of the key events being JakCloth in mid-2013. These events provided an opportunity for Erigo to engage directly with consumers and establish a stronger presence within the local fashion scene (Hanifah et al., 2024).

To stay competitive and adapt to the changing digital landscape, Erigo joined the e-commerce platform Shopee in 2017. This move allowed the brand to leverage the growing popularity of online shopping in Southeast Asia and provided an additional avenue for expanding its customer base. Today, Erigo has not only established itself as a leading fashion brand in Indonesia but also expanded its reach to other countries in the region, including Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines, and Thailand. The brand's continued success reflects its ability to adapt to market trends, utilize digital platforms effectively, and build a strong presence both online and offline (Andrian et al., 2024). Erigo's growth story serves as a testament to the importance of innovation, strategic marketing, and understanding consumer needs in a highly competitive industry.

Erigo's plagiarism case began with the release of its latest collection, which included the 'Sukajan' jacket. It was quickly uncovered that Erigo did not design the jacket himself but rather plagiarized it from a Polish artist named Nora Powora. This disclosure generated widespread public outrage and remorse for Erigo's behavior, as the brand was caught borrowing someone else's design without permission. The scandal jeopardized Erigo's reputation, emphasizing the ethical and legal ramifications of copying in the fashion business, particularly when the cloned designs are exploited for profit.

This dispute highlights the larger issue of intellectual property theft in the fashion industry, where the line between inspiration and imitation may frequently become blurred. Erigo infringed Nora Powora's intellectual property rights by using her design without permission, while violating the industry's fundamental principles of originality and creativity. The public's reaction to this episode demonstrates a growing knowledge and intolerance of such unethical activities, which can have long-term consequences for a brand's credibility and consumer trust (Firdaus et al., 2024).

The ramifications of this case reach beyond Erigo's immediate reputation. It serves as a warning to other fashion firms about the necessity of upholding intellectual property rights. To avoid legal ramifications and uphold ethical standards, brands must verify that all designs are either original or lawfully licensed. The event also emphasizes the need for stricter controls and procedures in the fashion industry to protect artists and designers from copying and foster a culture of respect and honesty. Overall, the Erigo plagiarism case demonstrates the necessity of originality and correct attribution in the fashion business (Zappelin et al., 2024). It serves as a reminder to brands of their ethical and legal responsibilities, as well as the potential consequences of failing to meet these standards. Addressing these difficulties will necessitate a determined effort to defend intellectual property rights and build an atmosphere that respects and values creativity.

In the Penguin English dictionary, reputation is defined as the overall quality or character as seen or judged by others. Based on this, it can be seen that reputation is not something that is owned by a company or organization, reputation is something that is given by other people to a company or organization. Reputation is something valuable.

Having a good reputation certainly has benefits for the company. A good reputation can provide benefits including building a strong brand, launching new products, having consumer trust, and so on. Reputation-damaging issues or incidents can undermine those benefits (Ilmi et al., 2024).

Benoit introduced the Image Repair Theory (IRT) as an essential and comprehensive framework aimed at assisting companies and organizations in recovering from reputation crises (Langaro et al., 2024). IRT's primary goal is to provide entities with a clear and structured understanding of the diverse communication strategies available to effectively address and resolve these crises. This theoretical framework acknowledges that reputation crises often emerge suddenly and can inflict significant damage if not managed promptly and strategically. The need for rapid response is critical, but it must be coupled with well-thought-out communication tactics to mitigate harm and rebuild public trust (Waseem & Kamal, 2024).

The Image Repair Theory outlines several key strategies that organizations can employ during a crisis. These include denial, where the organization refutes the accusations or allegations made against it; evasion of responsibility, which involves minimizing the perceived responsibility for the crisis; reducing offensiveness, where efforts are made to reduce the negative perception of the event; corrective action, where the organization commits to rectifying the issue and preventing future occurrences; and mortification, which involves offering a sincere apology and seeking forgiveness from those affected (Fraile et al., 2024).

By understanding and implementing these strategies, organizations can navigate the complexities of reputation management more effectively. IRT emphasizes the importance of tailoring the response to the specific nature and context of the crisis (Al Katheeri et al., 2024). For instance, a denial strategy may be appropriate when false information is being spread, whereas corrective action might be necessary when there is a clear and acknowledged fault on the part of the organization.

Moreover, the theory underscores the importance of transparency and consistent communication with stakeholders throughout the crisis management process. Maintaining open lines of communication helps to manage public perception and rebuild trust. Organizations must also be mindful of the long-term implications of their crisis management strategies, ensuring that their actions contribute to sustainable reputation repair and enhanced public confidence (Al Katheeri et al., 2024). In essence, the Image Repair Theory offers a robust and versatile toolkit for organizations facing reputation crises. It provides a strategic roadmap for navigating the immediate fallout of a crisis and lays the foundation for long-term reputation recovery and resilience. By employing the strategies outlined in IRT, organizations can effectively manage crises, mitigate damage, and ultimately restore and strengthen their public image (Benoit, 2024).

Within the scope of IRT, Benoit identified five distinct crisis response strategies that organizations may deploy depending on the nature of the challenge. Firstly, denial involves refusing to acknowledge any wrongdoing or involvement in the crisis. Secondly, evasion of responsibility shifts blame onto others or external factors rather than accepting culpability. Thirdly, reducing offensiveness seeks to soften the impact of the crisis by presenting fewer offensive versions of events. Fourthly, corrective action entails implementing measures to rectify past wrongdoings and prevent recurrence. Lastly, mortification, or self-criticism, involves openly acknowledging errors and expressing genuine remorse for them (Benoit, 2024).

By leveraging these five strategies underpinned by IRT, organizations can

proactively manage their responses to reputation crises. Effective implementation ensures that messages conveyed to the public are transparent, sincere, and constructive (Talawanich & Pongwat, 2024). This approach not only aids in containing immediate fallout but also fosters longer-term recovery by re-establishing trustworthiness and reliability. Consequently, IRT remains an invaluable resource for corporate communicators tasked with safeguarding organizational reputations amidst turbulent circumstances.

The limited number of previous research studies focused on Erigo, particularly in the context of crisis communication, underscores the novelty of the current research. While there is one notable study by Ahmad Faiq Syukron titled “Eiger’s Crisis Communication and the Challenge of Reputation Repair in the Digital Age,” which examines Eiger’s PR response using Image Repair Theory (IRT), there is a scarcity of literature specifically addressing Erigo’s crisis management strategies. This gap presents an opportunity for further exploration into how Erigo navigated its recent plagiarism allegations, particularly as it relates to the application of IRT in a different context compared to Eiger (Syukron, 2021).

In addition to Syukron’s research, other studies have touched upon various aspects of Erigo’s marketing and brand strategies. For instance, one study analyzed Erigo’s growth strategy within the Indonesian fashion industry, focusing on competitive management theories and market penetration strategies. Another research project examined the influence of social media marketing and brand ambassadors on consumer purchase decisions among students at Andalas University. These studies highlight Erigo’s prominence in the local fashion landscape but do not delve into crisis communication or reputation repair strategies specifically (Dewi & Aslami, 2022).

The existing literature primarily emphasizes growth strategies and marketing effectiveness rather than crisis management. For example, research by Mutia Sari Dewi and Nuri Aslami explored Erigo’s marketing strategies to reach international markets, displaying the brand’s successful expansion efforts during a challenging economic climate. However, none of these studies provide insights into how Erigo responded to crises or how its PR strategies were aligned with IRT principles. This lack of focused research on crisis communication highlights the need for the current study, which aims to fill this gap by examining Erigo’s specific responses to plagiarism allegations (Dewi & Aslami, 2022).

Previous studies often focused on marketing techniques and consumer behavior rather than crisis communication frameworks. While IRT has been used in other situations, such as Eiger’s, it has not been thoroughly investigated in regard to Erigo’s problems. This gives a unique opportunity for the current study to add new knowledge to the area by using IRT to address Erigo’s plagiarism dilemma. As a result, it can provide useful insights into how brands might effectively manage their reputations during ethical scrutiny (Dewi & Aslami, 2022).

In summary, the limited focus on Erigo within existing research literature emphasizes the novelty of this study. While previous works have explored aspects such as marketing strategies and brand growth, there is a distinct lack of analysis regarding crisis communication and reputation management specific to Erigo. This gap not only highlights the importance of the current research but also underscores its potential contributions to understanding how brands can navigate reputation crises effectively using established theories like Image Repair Theory (Syukron, 2021).

The purpose of this study is to identify and explain how Erigo’s Public Relations

(PR) team overcomes the crisis related to plagiarism allegations and how they attempt to restore the brand's reputation using strategies from the Image Repair Theory (IRT). In today's fast-paced digital environment, effective crisis communication is crucial for maintaining a company's image, especially when faced with serious accusations that can damage consumer trust (Novelayanti et al., 2024). By analyzing Erigo's PR response, this research aims to provide insights into the specific strategies employed to navigate the complexities of public perception during a reputation crisis.

Erigo's approach to crisis management involves several key components that align with effective response strategies outlined in IRT. These strategies include denial, evasion of responsibility, reducing offensiveness, corrective action, and mortification. In the case of the plagiarism allegations, Erigo opted for a combination of corrective action and mortification (Y. Wang & Dong, 2017). The brand publicly acknowledged the issue, issued apologies, and took steps to compensate the affected illustrator. This proactive stance not only addressed the immediate concerns but also aimed to rebuild trust with consumers who may have felt betrayed by the brand's actions.

The significance of employing a well-thought-out crisis response strategy cannot be overstated. As highlighted in previous research, timely and transparent communication is essential for ensuring that accurate information reaches stakeholders and mitigates further harm. A successful PR strategy should prioritize swift decision-making and collaboration among stakeholders to present a united front during crises. For Erigo, this meant engaging with their audience through social media platforms and addressing concerns directly, which helped to manage public perception effectively (Iqbal et al., 2023).

Despite the importance of this research topic, there has been limited prior academic exploration specifically focused on Erigo's crisis communication strategies. Previous studies have primarily examined marketing strategies or brand growth without delving into crisis management. For example, research by Mutia Sari Dewi and Nuri Aslami analyzed Erigo's marketing tactics but did not address how the brand handled ethical challenges or reputation crises (Youn et al., 2024). This gap in literature underscores the novelty of the current study, which seeks to contribute new knowledge regarding how brands like Erigo can effectively manage reputational risks using established theoretical frameworks.

In summary, this study aims to fill a critical gap in understanding Erigo's PR responses during its plagiarism crisis by applying Image Repair Theory. By analyzing how Erigo navigated this challenging situation through specific crisis communication strategies, the research will provide valuable insights for other brands facing similar ethical dilemmas. Understanding these dynamics is essential for developing effective crisis management practices that not only address immediate issues but also foster long-term brand loyalty and trust among consumers (Hasibuan & Irwansyah, 2020).

Methods

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to explore how Erigo's Public Relations (PR) team addresses the crisis stemming from plagiarism allegations. The qualitative research methodology is particularly effective for this investigation as it allows for an in-depth understanding of the complex dynamics involved in crisis communication. Qualitative research is characterized by its unstructured, exploratory nature, focusing on smaller samples to provide rich insights into specific problem settings (Babbie, 2016). This approach enables researchers to capture the nuances of Erigo's PR strategies and the

contextual factors influencing their effectiveness. The case study method is employed in this research to collect and describe existing phenomena in depth through comprehensive data collection. As Creswell notes, a case study utilizes various data sources to provide a holistic view of the subject matter. In this case, the focus is on Erigo's response to the plagiarism crisis, allowing for a detailed exploration of how the brand navigated public perception and managed its reputation (Creswell, 2007). The unit of analysis is Erigo's PR response strategies, which will be examined through document analysis and interviews with key stakeholders involved in the crisis management process.

Data collection primarily involves document analysis, which serves as a critical source of information regarding Erigo's PR efforts. Documents may include official statements, social media posts, press releases, and other relevant communications that reflect the company's response to the crisis. This method allows for a systematic examination of how Erigo communicated with its stakeholders during the crisis, providing insights into the messaging strategies employed and how they align with the principles of Image Repair Theory. Additionally, interviews with PR professionals or company representatives may be conducted to gain further context and perspectives on their decision-making processes (Clark & Creswell, 2008).

The analytical procedures for this study will involve coding and thematic analysis of the collected qualitative data. Thematic analysis focuses on identifying patterns and themes within the data that relate to Erigo's crisis communication strategies. This method allows for a comprehensive understanding of how different strategies were employed in response to public concerns about plagiarism. By categorizing responses and analyzing them in relation to Image Repair Theory, the research aims to uncover valuable insights into effective PR practices during reputation crises (Claeys & Coombs, 2020). Overall, this descriptive qualitative approach using a case study method provides a robust framework for examining Erigo's crisis communication strategies. By focusing on document analysis and potentially incorporating stakeholder perspectives, this research aims to uncover insights into how brands can effectively manage their reputations during ethical scrutiny. The findings will contribute not only to academic literature but also offer practical implications for brands facing similar challenges in navigating reputation crises effectively.

Results

Organizations or companies are inevitably confronted with crises during their operations. Crisis management involves the preparation and effective response to minimize uncertainty and mitigate risk factors. One prevalent type of crisis faced by companies is a reputation crisis, which requires the implementation of reputation management strategies to maintain and enhance the reputation a company has built (Morissan, 2010).

Reputation management is transformed into a reputation strategy when companies actively address reputation issues with positive approaches, demonstrating their commitment to stakeholders and shareholders. A comprehensive reputation strategy consists of four key pillars: maintaining, enhancing, protecting, and leveraging the company's reputation. Maintenance involves the fulfillment of promises made by the company and its brand (Enke & Borchers, 2021). Enhancement focuses on improvement through initiatives, decisions, changes, announcements, and excellent performance in achieving organizational goals. Protection aims to ensure the organization's reputation remains robust, while leveraging involves creating a conducive environment for the

organization to more effectively achieve its core objectives (Park et al., 2020).

Crisis management is essential for organizations in addressing crises, such as reputation crises, that may arise. The Image Repair Theory (IRT) was developed to assist organizations in recovering from reputation crises. IRT is based on the premise that individuals and organizations engage in communicative behavior to reduce, repair, or avoid damage to their reputation from perceived wrongdoing. When individuals, groups, or organizations are accused of undesirable behavior, their reputations can be negatively impacted. The essence of Image Repair Theory is to correct the alleged errors in order to restore the damaged reputation (Benoit, 2024).

In response to the crisis, a communication model outlined by Timothy and Coombs (2020) was employed by Erigo, emphasizing the influence on public perception during challenging times. The strategy included the issuance of an open letter of apology via Instagram, addressing the concerns of consumers and stakeholders. This letter incorporated critical elements, such as the acknowledgment of mistakes, commitment to improvement, and engagement with consumers (Claeys & Coombs, 2020). By directly addressing the public, Erigo sought to rebuild trust and demonstrate transparency in its operations.

The plagiarism crisis was managed by Erigo through several strategic actions. Firstly, the mistake was publicly acknowledged, demonstrating accountability and transparency. This step is crucial in crisis management as it helps mitigate the negative impact on the brand's reputation. The open letter of apology issued on Instagram served not only as a formal acknowledgment of the issue but also as a commitment to taking corrective measures.

The content of the apology letter was carefully crafted to include critical elements that resonate with consumers. The mistake was acknowledged, a vital first step in rebuilding trust. A strong commitment to improvement was expressed, outlining the steps to be taken to prevent future occurrences. These steps included the enhancement of the design approval processes and the implementation of stricter oversight when collaborating with freelance illustrators. By engaging directly with its audience through social media, Erigo demonstrated a willingness to be transparent and accountable.

The plagiarism issue represented a significant challenge for Erigo as it navigated the path to recovery. The effectiveness of the apology and subsequent actions will be crucial in determining whether the brand can restore its reputation and retain its loyal customer base. As the brand moves forward, reinforcing its commitment to originality and ethical practices within the fashion industry will be essential. These steps will help Erigo regain consumer confidence and ensure long-term success in a competitive market.

The public's response to Erigo's actions will play a critical role in the brand's recovery. In the digital age, where information spreads rapidly, maintaining a positive public image is more challenging yet more critical than ever. The strategy employed by Erigo, which involved issuing a direct and public apology via Instagram, shows an understanding of the importance of transparency and direct communication with consumers. This approach can help mitigate the immediate backlash and pave the way for long-term trust rebuilding.

To further enhance its reputation, Erigo must continue to engage with its audience, providing updates on the steps being taken to address the issue and prevent future occurrences. This ongoing communication is vital in demonstrating the brand's commitment to change and accountability. Additionally, fostering a culture of respect for intellectual property within the company and the broader industry will be crucial. By

setting high ethical standards and leading by example, Erigo can contribute to a more sustainable and respectful fashion industry.

Erigo's experience highlights the importance of effective crisis management strategies and transparent communication in maintaining and rebuilding a brand's reputation. Brands must acknowledge their mistakes, commit to improvements, and engage directly with consumers to navigate crises more effectively and emerge stronger. The lessons learned from Erigo's approach can serve as a valuable guide for other brands facing similar challenges in the fast-paced and highly scrutinized fashion industry.

Erigo will discontinue the sale of the Sukajan product featuring Nora's design, and any remaining stock will be donated to those in need, with Nora's support. The importance of appreciating and respecting artwork has been emphasized, especially in an industry where art plays a significant role. This experience provides a learning opportunity for everyone concerned, allowing Erigo to emerge better, wiser, and stronger (Firdaus et al., 2024). The company's dedication to providing excellent service to its loyal customers is steadfast. Erigo expresses sincere gratitude to @norapotwora for her understanding and generosity, along with being committed to repaying her kindness. The organization intends to enhance its partnerships with freelancers, designers, and illustrators in the future.

Recent developments indicate that significant steps have been taken by Erigo to address the plagiarism issue involving the artwork of Polish artist Nora Potwora. In a public statement, the company acknowledged its mistakes and expressed sincere apologies for the incident (Sirojuddin et al., 2024). A mutual agreement with Nora, which includes compensation for the plagiarized work, has been reached. As part of this resolution, the sale of the Sukajan jacket featuring Nora's design has been canceled, and any remaining stock will be donated to those in need. This decision reflects Erigo's commitment to ethical practices within the fashion industry and underscores the importance of respecting artistic creations, ensuring that all artists receive the recognition they deserve.

Erigo has also expressed that they have learned valuable lessons from this experience and are dedicated to preventing similar issues in the future. They plan to implement stricter oversight regarding design approvals, particularly when collaborating with freelance illustrators. This incident serves as a reminder of the critical importance of respecting artistic integrity in the fashion sector. As they move forward, Erigo aims to strengthen its relationships with freelancers and collaborators while upholding the highest standards of creativity in their products.

Erigo's reputation crisis was addressed using one of Image Repair Theory's procedures, the mortification strategy. The responsibility for the hurtful conduct or incident was admitted, an apology was delivered, and forgiveness was requested. This approach also featured regretful expressions. Erigo apologized to the public and the concerned illustrator. The letter of apology noted that it was hoped that everyone would learn from the incident and return better, wiser, and stronger, with efforts made to deliver the best possible service to loyal clients.

Erigo admits mistake and will provide the best for his customers in the future. This sentence can also be interpreted as a form of regret, in the sentence Erigo hopes that they can learn from the mistakes they have made. In the letter of apology it can also be seen that Erigo stealing or plagiarizing other people's work is an act that is prohibited. Therefore, Erigo is responsible for paying compensation to the illustrator and is willing to cancel the sale of the Sukajan jacket that has Nora's design. Erigo's success in dealing

with critical communications due to plagiarism problems can be seen from the speed with which Erigo responded to this matter, which was only 1 day later when Nora, whose work was plagiarized, tweeted on January 22nd, 2020, and Erigo wrote an apology letter on January 23rd, 2020. And Nora Yanng who is the illustrator of his plagiarized work has received an apology from Erigo as well as compensation from Erigo.

Discussion

IRT was created to understand the communication options available to organizations or individuals in the face of threats to their reputation. Although IRT was not developed specifically for crisis communication, it can be used in crisis communication because crises are a reputational threat (Hasibuan & Irwansyah, 2020). The following are 5 crisis response strategies in IRT, namely:

1. Denial is a strategy by doing denial. There are two types of denial, namely simple denial and shifting the blame. A simple denial states that the harmful event or action did not occur. Meanwhile, shifting the blame, trying to identify the source of the problem, and shifting responsibility for the incident or action to other parties.
2. Evasion of Responsibility is a strategy to avoid responsibility for work or other actions by provocation, defeasibility, or accident.
3. Reduce of Offensiveness is a strategy undertaken to reduce negative feelings by using persuasion to the public and convincing the public that the situation is not as bad as public opinion.
4. Correction Action, a strategy carried out by correcting actions (errors) that occur and informing the correct statements.
5. Mortification, a strategy carried out by accepting responsibility for the offensive action/event that occurred, apologizing, and asking for forgiveness. Expressions of regret also fall into this category.

In reaction to the crisis, Erigo used a communication strategy proposed by Timothy and Coombs, emphasizing the impact on public perception during difficult circumstances. The strategy included posting an open letter of apology on Instagram, addressing consumer and stakeholder concerns (Claeys & Coombs, 2020). They had crucial features, including admitting faults, committing to progress, and engaging with customers. Erigo hoped to rebuild trust and transparency in its operations by addressing the public directly.

Erigo's method of dealing with the plagiarism situation included various strategic moves. First and foremost, the corporation publicly admitted its error, exhibiting accountability and transparency (Austin & Jin, 2016). This phase is critical in crisis management since it helps to lessen the negative influence on the brand's reputation. The open letter of apology on Instagram served not only as a public acknowledgment of the situation but also as a commitment to corrective measures.

The apology letter's text was carefully constructed to contain key features that appeal to customers. Erigo admitted his error, which is an important first step in repairing trust. The brand also declared a strong commitment to change, stating steps it will take to prevent similar situations in the future. This included improving their design approval processes and instituting more stringent control when working with freelance illustrators. Erigo shows a willingness to be honest and accountable by connecting with its audience directly via social media.

The plagiarism issue represents a significant test for Erigo as it navigates the path to recovery. The effectiveness of its apology and subsequent actions will be crucial in determining whether it can restore its reputation and maintain its loyal customer base. As

the brand moves forward, reinforcing its commitment to originality and ethical practices within the fashion industry will be essential (Marsen, 2019). By taking these steps, Erigo can work towards regaining consumer confidence and ensuring long-term success in a competitive market.

The public's response to Erigo's actions will play a critical role in the brand's recovery. In the digital age, where information spreads rapidly, maintaining a positive public image is more challenging yet more critical than ever. Erigo's strategy to address the crisis through a direct and public apology via Instagram shows an understanding of the importance of transparency and direct communication with consumers (Prabowo & Komaladewi, 2024). This approach can help mitigate the immediate backlash and pave the way for long-term trust rebuilding.

To further enhance its reputation, Erigo must continue to engage with its audience, providing updates on the steps it is taking to address the issue and prevent future occurrences. This ongoing communication is vital in demonstrating the brand's commitment to change and accountability. Additionally, fostering a culture of respect for intellectual property within the company and the broader industry will be crucial. By setting high ethical standards and leading by example, Erigo can contribute to a more sustainable and respectful fashion industry.

Erigo's experience highlights the importance of effective crisis management strategies and the role of transparent communication in maintaining and rebuilding a brand's reputation (Roy et al., 2020). By acknowledging mistakes, committing to improvements, and engaging directly with consumers, brands can navigate crises more effectively and emerge stronger. The lessons learned from Erigo's approach can serve as a valuable guide for other brands facing similar challenges in the fast-paced and highly scrutinized fashion industry.

Erigo's response to the plagiarism crisis highlights the importance of swift, transparent, and decisive actions in crisis management. By publicly acknowledging its mistake and engaging with its audience through social media, the company effectively mitigated reputational damage. The brand's open letter of apology and its decision to halt the sale of the plagiarized product set a clear precedent for addressing such issues. Furthermore, Erigo's corrective actions, including compensating the original artist, demonstrate its commitment to ethical practices.

To prevent future incidents, Erigo must strengthen its internal processes, including design approval protocols, and foster a culture of originality and respect for intellectual property. Investing in training for designers and collaborators can further reinforce these principles. Continuing to engage with consumers and providing regular updates will be vital in rebuilding trust and reinforcing brand loyalty. Through surveys, feedback, and social media interaction, Erigo can better align its strategies with customer expectations.

The implications of this crisis management approach extend beyond Erigo, offering insights for the broader fashion industry. As digital platforms play an increasingly central role in shaping public perception, brands must be proactive in protecting intellectual property and maintaining ethical standards. The Erigo case underscores the necessity for brands to develop comprehensive crisis management plans that reflect a commitment to integrity and accountability.

Conclusion

In the digital age, social media presents artists and brands with both opportunities and challenges. Illustrators can publicly expose their work, increasing awareness and

chronicling their creative journey, but this exposure also opens the door to potential misuse, since original works can be appropriated without agreement, resulting in illegitimate commercialization. Erigo as an Indonesian fashion business has faced criticism for reportedly plagiarizing designs from illustrator Nora Potwora, who accused the brand of stealing her drawings without permission for their Sukajan jacket on Twitter. This episode drew substantial criticism for Erigo's ethical policies. Erigo responded by apologizing on Instagram, cancelling the jacket sale, and compensating Potwora, displaying a willingness to accept responsibility and aligning with Image Repair Theory's mortification method. This situation highlights the necessity of successful public relations methods in maintaining brand reputation, as well as the ethical duties that brands have in protecting intellectual property. Prioritizing creativity and ethical practices is critical to preserving consumer trust and creating long-term connections. Erigo's situation demonstrates how quickly public opinion can move in the digital realm, underlining the importance of proactive communication and accountability for firms seeking to thrive in today's competitive marketplace.

Conflict of Interest

It is hereby attested that there is no conflict of interest arising from any financial, personal, or other relationships with individuals, organizations, or entities relating to the manuscript's subject matter. We confirm that none of the authors has any financial interests, affiliations, or other relationships that could have impacted or distorted the research or its conclusions. This declaration protects the work's neutrality and integrity and indicates that all contributions to the manuscript were done without any external or competing interests.

Acknowledgements

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the authors of outstanding articles from around the world, whose valuable contributions have enriched this research. Their expertise, insights, and dedication to advancing knowledge have played an integral role in the success of this study, and we deeply appreciate the opportunity to build upon their findings.

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