WORD OF MOUTH STRATEGY TO PROMOTE INDONESIAN CULTURE THROUGH GAME INHERITAGE : BOUNDARY OF EXISTENCE

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Word of mouth communication activities in a company can be used as an alternative to the promotion mix resulting in more effective communication and selling. Tinker Games is one of the companies who rely on word of mouth strategy through game INheritage : Boundary of Existence to promote Indonesian culture. INheritage itself basically designed by Tinker Games as the first work of a major project which will consist of a lot of creative works in various media. This study uses descriptive qualitative approach, supported by constructivism. This study is intended to explain the strategy of word of mouth carried by Tinker Games to promote Indonesian culture through a game. The data obtained in this study is derived from interviews, literature, audio and visual documentation and observation. Informants in this study is divided into two, such as the key informants consisting of one person and the informant support consisted of two people. The Discussion of this research focused on the problem that has been identified through the analysis of three indicators, such as phases five basic elements of word of mouth, word of mouth nature and the difference in function of word of mouth. These results showed that related to five elements of WOM game players and employees of Tinker Games are as talkers, culture as the topics, social media as tools, respond to any discussion forums about INheritage: BoE as Taking Part element, and the use of google analytics as a tracking method. Tinker Games dividing the nature into positive and negative WOM as well as the different functions into expert to expert, expert-to-peer, and peer to peer.

Keywords: Strategy, Word of Mouth, Culture, Games, Tinker Games

I.   INTRODUCTION

Word of mouth has always been an interesting phenomenon to be discussed, according Aflit (2009) Some marketers have a skeptical view and look down on this kind of promotion, because it often requires a promotion of opinion leaders that are difficult to find. Moreover word of mouth tends to be more difficult to be controlled. Though word of mouth can be more effective than advertising. Word of Mouth itself is an informal communication between the consumer about a product. Kotler (2000) declared that Word of mouth alone has become an interesting phenomenon in the world of marketing and communications, where word of mouth becomes one of the strengths in the market. Word of Mouth in communication can be either a conversation or a testimonial committed by people who talking about a product or services. In this study, the authors take the focus of research on word of mouth strategy of the Tinker Games company on the game called INheritage: Boundary of Existence in promoting Indonesian culture. INheritage itself basically designed by Tinker Games as the first work of a major project which will consist of a lot of works in various media. Game INheritage: Boundary of Existence itself is made into two versions, namely Japan and Global (Indonesia - English). This game is already available for download on the play store and Apple store.

In Japan, Tinker Games is collaborated with the Japanese game publisher named Kakehashi Games. Game INheritage: Boundary of Existence has a good response from the fans of the game in Japan. INheritage: BoE will be show for the umpteenth time at the Tokyo Game Show 2015 which will be held on 17 to 20 September last. Globally in the play store, there are already more than 10 thousand users who have downloaded this game and this game has a good rating of 4.5 out of 5. In addition, the uses of the culture in the game INheritage: Boundary of Existence add cultural values that exist in the game. In Indonesia the hype of the game INheritage: BoE itself is quite large among gamers who saw this game has a potential for something new and unique to be played. For the layman, the convergence of the culture with the game and marketed globally appeal to the Indonesian people themselves It also help this Indonesia product to compete internationally. Culture is learned, not innate. (Budyatna, 2012: 36). Through this game, Tinker Games invites users to know the differences cultures in Indonesia by using visual interest. This paper is an attempt to give information and to understand the consept of marketing strategy that Tinker Games use to promote culture in their game.

II.   DISCUSSION

According to official page from facebook, INheritage: Boundary of Existence is a horizontal shoot 'em up game which combines Indonesian culture, anime-style artwork, and visual novel into an engaging adventure. This game offers a deep storyline with a touch of Indonesian mythologies presented in a fascinating visual novel. Nala, the protagonist, take a responsibility as an Arca to defend her hometown from Yaksa's assaults before she realize that the matter is more complicated than she can ever imagine. As Nala, you will play a total of 11 stages in 5 unique cities based on real cities in Indonesia facing over 20 types of enemy, also based on Indonesian urban stories with each's unique characteristic. Nala can perform 5 explosive special attacks with different gesture command as she is accompanied by mystical animals called Rakyan throughout her journey to find the answer of the matter. INheritage: Boundary of Existence is armed with amazing piece of artwork and wonderful fusion of modern and traditional musical instruments as the original background music which are going to pleased your senses. This game also provides 3 selections of difficulty levels to challenge players. And players can find the explanation of characters, places, cultures, and traditional weapons of Indonesia that appear in the game, in INheripedia, an INheritage Encyclopedia. INheritage: Boundary of Existence will be the first series of INheritage Project. Through this game, Tinker Games hope players will be motivated to find out more about Indonesian heritage that they possibly don't know well before.

This paper entitled " Word of Mouth Strategy Through Game INheritage : Boundary of Existence to Promote Indonesian Culture." has a goal to find out how WOM strategy undertaken by Tinker Games in promoting the culture of Indonesia on INheritage : BoE game. In this paper the researcher will explain the results of the research that has been conducted. In gathering information

researchers used several methods such as by in-depth interviews in which researchers collect data or information by means of face to face directly circuitry informant in order to obtain complete data and depth.

In this INheritage game, namely the use of an intermediary role in spreading a consumer experience, be it negative or positive to other people considered fit perfectly and appropriate. The use of various events such as quizzes, trivia, event activities that involve a lot of people in it like the event fasting together and build a good image to enliven various activities in accordance with what is being widely discussed, such as supporting the activities of KAA in Bandung. The response obtained is also very good. Cultural values to be conveyed was conveyed properly and on target. Whether it visually in the game, as well as knowledge gained by the players themselves.

2.1. WORD OF MOUTH

As a part of the marketing communications mix, word of mouth communication is communication which is done through word of mouth conversation by sharing their experiences about a product or service superiority in order to attract other consumers who listened to the conversation. This strategy became one of the most influential strategies in the consumer's decision in using a product or service. Kotler and Keller (2009: 512) describes the word of mouth is the marketing activities through an intermediary person to person whether oral, written, or electronic communication device related to the purchase experience services or experience of using the product or service.

2.2. CULTURE

Cultures derived from Sanskrit that buddhayah, which is the plural of buddhi (the mind or intellect) interpreted as matters related to the mind, and the human mind. In Latin culture it is called Colere, that processing or working. It can be interpreted also as tilling the soil or farming. Culture is a series of abstract symbols, public, or ideational and behavior is a series of organism-powered movement, specific and biases observed. In this case the behavior is a manifestation of the culture or cultures gives meaning to the those human activities (Lebra 1976: 42).

2.3. INHERITAGE : BOUNDARY OF EXISTENCE

'INheritage : Boundary of Existence' is the first product of 'INheritage project' by Tinker Games. It's a horizontal STG or "Shoot 'em up" game with visual novel elements which mix the element of Indonesia culture with popular fantasy style and gesture function gameplay. According to official facebook page of INheritage : Boundary of Existence, the story of the game is *"this is just one from many unwritten tales about them. Arca. Those who were chosen to protect their respective city and the balance of the world by sending back Yaksa, the half-god being from other world, to their own world. With power given by the Tree of Life, Kalpataru which, and guided by city's spirit, Rakyan, They will always watch over us. Even now. Being chosen as Arca of Bandung after an incident that killed her and her best friend 2 years ago. Nala continue her new live; living as a high-school girl and at the same time protecting her city as Arca. But one day, The Kalpataru roots which supporting the barrier between two worlds in Bandung suddenly disappeared. To protect her city, Nala has to find out a what's really happen before the whole city thrown into abyss. But then, she realize that this crisis is bigger than she expected."*

Figure 1: Banner of INheritage : Boundary of Existence
Source: official facebook INheritage : Boundary of Existence

Figure 2: game INheritage : Boundary of Existence on device android
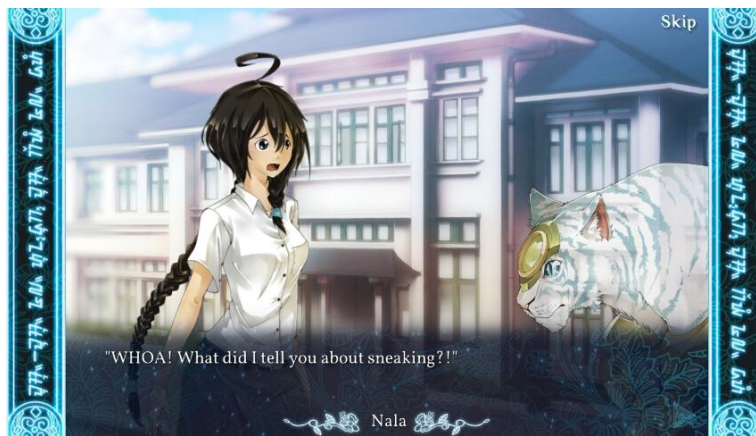Source: Private Collection

Figure 3: game INheritage : Boundary of Existence on device android
Source: Private Collection

2.4. WORD OF MOUTH STRATEGY THROUGH GAME INHERITAGE: BOUNDARY OF EXISTENCE

According to Sernovitz (2009: 31) there are five basic elements in the formulation of WOM, namely:

A. Talkers:

In the development of WOM is required an intermediary to pass, the game INheritage: BoE's response is unbelievably players needed, where they will talk about a brand commonly referred to as an influencer. This speaker could be anyone, from friends, neighbors, family, etc. There are always people who are enthusiastic to speak. They are the most spirited recounted his experience. The players are excited at spreading the game to his friend, influencers here can also be employees or people working at Tinker Games itself. Based on interviews and observations made, the Talkers in five basic elements in the formulation of WOM are gamers INheritage: BoE and the people who work at Tinker Games itself, this is because they have experience in playing the game, know the game, and spread it to friends, relatives or family.

B. Topics:

It deals with what will be discussed by the speaker. A good topic is a topic that is simple, easy to carry (portable), and natural. The entire WOM indeed originated from an exciting topic to be discussed. From interviews that investigators obtained, the average of the topics discussed and that occurs between players and prospective customers is the culture, the depiction of the characters and themes of the unique and interesting story to follow. Various news portal that addresses INheritage was almost all topics discussed and having a focus on culture, and the original game made in Indonesia. The conclusion of the discussion, which became Topics in five basic elements in the formulation of WOM is about the culture, the originality of the story and the portrayal of characters and the interface of game which is unique and interesting.

Figure 4: using traditional clothes batik Patrakomala Cangkurileung that same with Nala in the game INheritage: BoE to promote the game
Source: Private Collection

Figure 5: example of cultural elements in the INheritage BoE
Source: Private Collection

C. Tools:

Tool deployment of the topic by the speaker. Topics that have been there also need a tool that helps to keep the topic or message can be run, the tool is a tool that can make people easily discuss or transmit the company's products or services to others. Could be with a sample, coupon or brochure. Or the Internet is also a very effective and helps to keep the message be able dispersed. It is mainly through mailing lists, or other social media. According to the results of interviews have been conducted, the tools used to spread WOM and used by consumers to invite friends to play the game is almost all through social media such as twitter, facebook. Even deviantart as an illustrator site used to display and sell the works of an image is also used to promote the game INheritage BoE. Researchers conclude based on interviews and observations, that the use of various of social media to reach out to all players INheritage and promote it through various media and events performed very effective.

Figure 6: example of brochure that Tinker Games use
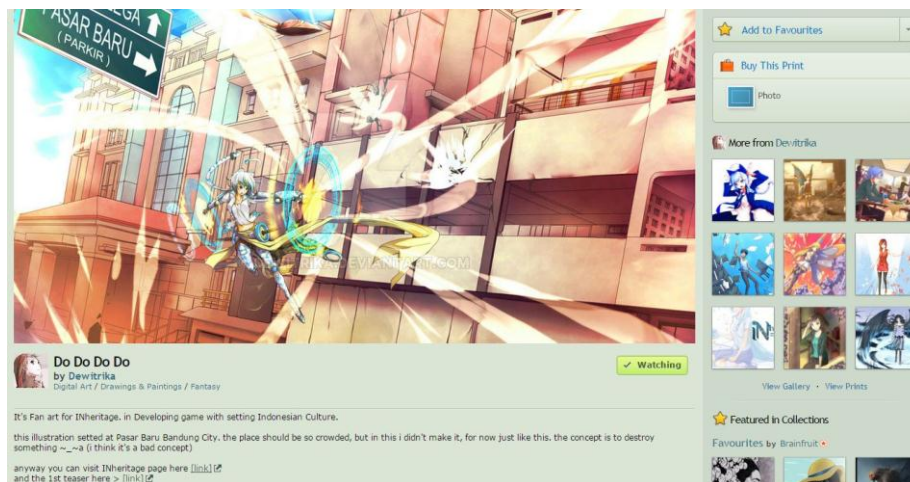Source: Official Facebook INheritage BoE

Figure 7: example of promotion in deviantart
Source: Private Collection

Even when the first release INheritage games, prospective players are able to play these game before the game is released (beta tester) to invite prospective customers to come to the office to try to direct Tinker Games, as well as to provide input to the game itself. As a prospective player, this is a special occasion, where consumers can play a role as a player who helped the completion of the game. Which ultimately customer satisfaction is exactly what will be the discussion and the topics discussed and distributed to friends of the consumer. One of the tools used to spread the news through

the news and images disseminated via deviantart site that has an international base. In this way, many connoisseurs images or games from abroad and within the country know about the news. To include a link to visit the official page and the teaser of INheritage itself, the visitors page Deviantart this new information. From this information can be open discussion of the topic of the visitors who become WOM later.

Figure 8: promotion mail through gmail to invite player to become beta tester the game
Source: Private Collection

D. Taking Part:

A conversation will be lost if only one person is talking about the product. Hence the need for other people who participated in the conversation that WOM can continue. Such as the participation of the company or anyone involved in the medium and participate in the conversation to help respond to the products or services of the prospective customers so that the direction of WOM can develop in accordance with the target. We make twitter and facebook official of INheritage, then from the Tinker Games can monitor and join discussions with gamers, or users who simply asked.

In this way, the consumer response would be either because of complaints, ideas, and comments made will be directly addressed by the Tinker Games Based on the interview to one of the marketing and communication executive of Tinker Games, there are employees who are specialized to handle a variety of social media, including providing reply and answer questions from consumers. This is done so that the image arising from the consumer to be positive with a quick response when someone asks me or help consumers who have difficulty in playing games with encouragement in various social media accounts.
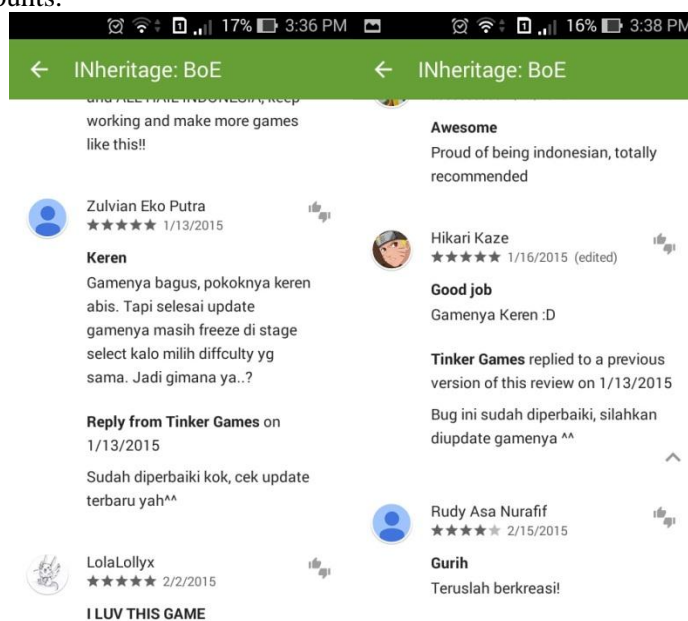

Figure 9: quick response when negative rumor occur
Source: Private Collection

E. Tracking:

Tracking is an action the company to provide the tools to oversee / monitor and respond to what consumers say. So that the company can understand and learn what the positive or negative consumer feedback, so that with so companies can learn from that input for the progress of the company better. As explained by the Bima Aryuna, Tinker Games use google analytics to see the traffic that occurs at any time relating to a search or any activity that involves the INheritage.

according Sutisna (2001: 149) WOM by its nature can be divided into two, namely:

1. Word of mouth is positive

WOM can arise when a product that has been consumed successfully satisfy consumers. Consumers who are already satisfied not necessarily tell others. The new positive WOM will emerge from an experience considered exceptional by the consumer at the time of high emotional level. That is what is gained customers after the transaction is higher than expectations. So without being asked will tell the experience that he felt the closest people. It was felt in the spread WOM by INheritage game: BoE. Response when first created and published to various media very well. And at that time had a scene. This game even ogled by a Japanese company to established cooperation in the sale of the game. One of the news raised globally and International INheritage is when one of the well-known news portals such as MTV discusses INheritage game. Of course the presence of the news, INheritage presence as a game made Indonesia become famous, plus it is rarely a developer Indonesia move and make a game to fame.

2. Mouth to mouth Negative

WOM can arise when the product is consumed have been disappointing. Is a phenomenon of the most daunting enterprise disappointed because a consumer who will speak not only to people nearby but consumers will only deliver disappointment to many people as possible. At the company's Tinker Games, it does not occur, negative rumors gained merely technical errors in the game, which immediately responded immediately to avoid the spread of negative WOM.

According to Silverman (2009: 83) there are three different types of WOM among consumers that can be used

A. Expert to expert

On the type of expert to expert is an opinion leader who is an expert will submit confirmation of the information given to consumers or other opinion leaders with WOM marketing strategies are both verified. In addition to exchanging thoughts and others who are experts in the field, at this level, learning occurred and input to the game itself in the future. So for the future can be better. One is at the event Toys & Games Republic are regularly held in Bandung Trans Studio Mall. At this event, representatives of Tinker Games as a speaker and introduce to other game developers and visitors to the event on the gaming INheritage: BoE. In this activity, discussions among game developers is done to show the advantages of each game, and give feedback to each game for the future. Visitors who will see how the opinions of people who are experts in the field provide criticism and suggestions. Visitors who are interested and likes will definitely play the game, visitors here also serves as the third person of WOM process conducted among experts to other experts, the decision that will be submitted to the visitor to pass it on to his friend or not. In this event, Tinker Games earn the title as the Best Local charter Game Developer after beating several other game developers in terms of sales as well as consumer interest to play the game (top grossing).

B. Expert to peer

On the type of expert level equivalent or comparable to it is an opinion leader will deliver information through WOM affirmation of expert opinion leader comparable to both views of science will some information on the products offered. An example is from the Marketing & Communication of the Tinker gamesnya provide information to consumers and potential consumers who previously had often played games either similar or different genres. In this way, WOM which occurs more easily done because of the consumers themselves already know and understand the gaming field, and

in the process of WOM that occur consumers can easily recommend the game especially INheritage: BoE to fellow gamers that feel will like the type of game by genre like this. Usually at the level of experts of equal or comparable to it, starting with the relatives of staff Tinker Games themselves who understand the game, so it will be easy WOM conducted. Besides these types comparable to its own expert can also be done from the Tinker directly to consumers so that consumers who determine its response to other consumers through the experience and knowledge gained through information obtained from the opinion leader that Tinker Games.

C. Peer to peer

At comparable level comparable to explain that the delivery of the information provided by opinion leaders through WOM to consumers using the facilities and infrastructure available and sufficient to see the evidence that exists. Fellow consumers, to friends or relatives or family and to others at random. One of the most influential in WOM comparable level is comparable to the use of snowball effect. Where consumers A provides information on the game INheritage: the BoE to consumers and consumers B and C. B and C recommend this game to his friend, constantly carried out continuously from one to the other. With so more and more people know and are interested. Use of this snowball effect itself is also too abstract and can't control its spread. So from that target consumers who may be chosen to others who lay at random. Marketing & Communication of Tinker Games Milky aryuna also said that the use of snowball effect is very effective in the use of WOM strategy, although not controlled its spread in the form of positive or negative.

III.   METHOD

The author uses the paradigm of constructivism. Constructivism considers a science can't be separated from the subjectivity of the study because the researcher are essentially a part of the observed object. (Mufid, 2009: 94). Constructivist theory using a theoretical approach. Reality does not describe the individual but should be filtered through the way people perceive the reality. Constructivism rejects the view of positivism that separates subject and object of communication to shaping of meaning through the culture. In this paper, researchers used a qualitative research method, which qualitative research is seeks to lift ideographic various phenomena and social reality. Construction and development of the theory of promotions and sales can be formed from through various phenomena or cases studied empirically. Thus the resulting theory gaining a strong foothold in reality, is contextual and historical.

IV.   CONCLUSION

A. phase five basic elements in the formulation of Word of Mouth

At this stage, there are five critical elements that Talkers, Topics, Tools, Taking Part, and Tracking. In this stage, the five elements are carried out and made its design very well. It can be seen from the various activities as well as successful strategies used to attract people and received a positive response. Start of implementation talking element that divides its focus into two player game INheritage: BoE itself and employees of Tinker Games as intermediaries for distributing information that later became WOM. Use of a topic of interest with the theme of culture as a key to the success of the game INheritage: BoE itself. Then use a variety of media and event activities to help these topics can run and spread widely in accordance initial plan that was created earlier. Then in the distribution itself, part of Tinker Games also must be able to control and follow the development and progress of these activities through the taking part that can ultimately be evaluated in the form of tracking to see how successful the activities and the spread of information, whether effective or not.

B. Stage based nature of the Word of Mouth

After the formulation stage is carried out WOM, the Tinker Games divides into two WOM nature itself, namely the WOM positive and negative WOM. Wherein when a positive WOM spread, the good response from various media as well as the news happens to be very beneficial for the

continuation INheritage: BoE and Tinker gamesnya itself. In contrast to the negative response that had happened yet directly addressed so that no bad news about the game INheritage and Tinker Games.

C. Stages difference function Word of Mouth

In the end, when the basic elements and the division of the nature of WOM has been done, the final stage is to separate the dissemination of information WOM conducted based functions are divided into three categories, namely expert to expert which many experts in a particular field to take part in helping the success of a product in form discussions that resulted in criticism and constructive suggestions that are considered by consumers to choose the future. Then the expert to peer where the link centered on people and relatives of Tinker games itself as a mediator spread WOM or use people power or community leaders to help spread. As well as peer to peer inevitable among consumers to consumers as an expression and recommendations given to another person through experience or information obtained by him who will continue spreading as long as there is something interesting and new that can attract other consumers to be dug and discussed.

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