

# IMPLEMENTATION OF REACH COMMUNICATION PRINCIPLES IN THE INTERACTION OF DIGITAL MARKETING AGENCY ACCOUNT EXECUTIVES WITH CLIENTS

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## ABSTRACT

*Entering the digital era makes everyone obliged to keep abreast of existing developments, including entrepreneurs or existing companies, of course every company is competing to switch and compete in a new world, namely the digital world. This phenomenon provides great opportunities for entrepreneurs in advertising, causing competition in the advertising business line to become very tight. Therefore, every advertising agency must have a professional marketing division, one of which is an account executive, which is the spearhead for the success of an advertising agency. Advertising is very dependent on the client it has. So account executives must have good and practical communication skills and methods to attract, convince, and maintain good relations with clients. And to assist in the implementation of effective communication can be achieved with the five principles of effective communication namely REACH (Respect, Empathy, Audible, Clarity, Humble). Based on this, the author is very interested in discussing it further and in more depth regarding the implementation of effective communication of the REACH communication principles between account executives and clients.*

**Keywords:** Account executive, effective communication, REACH (respect, empathy, audible, clarity, humble)

## 1. PREFACE

Entering the digital era, people are required to keep up with developments. Because this era has a significant impact and changes on aspects of every human life, especially in the business sector. With the rapid development of the digital world, of course, it also affects the business world around the world, so that at this time many companies or brands are competing to follow the development of the digital world that is happening today, With the occurrence of this phenomenon, it provides business opportunities for digital marketing agencies or advertising agencies to offer promotional services or advertise to companies or brands that want to compete in this digital era.

Digital marketing agency or advertising agency is a company engaged as an intermediary, medium, between business actors or clients who want to advertise and media. An advertising agency consists of a team of professionals with talent and ability in their respective fields, who create something new related to the brand or company to help increase sales according to Frank Jefkins.(Christiagung, 2013)

Every company, especially advertising agencies, must have a professional marketing team, one of which is the Account Executive division which serves as the spearhead for advertising agencies as a communication bridge between the technical team and clients and help to find new business actors or clients who need help advertising.(Dwityas et al., 2021) An account executive, commonly called "AE," is one member of the professional marketing team in an advertising agency. Account executives have an important role for the sustainability of an advertising agency, ranging from finding and getting business actors who need help in advertising to maintaining good relationships with business actors. However, in an effort to maintain good relations with clients is

more challenging than imagined, because each client has different characteristics and ways of communicating. Thus, account executives must treat each client differently and implement effective communication patterns according to the characteristics of each client, and to assist in the implementation of effective communication can be achieved by the five laws or principles of effective communication, namely REACH.

According to Suranto Aw in Zainuri (2018) REACH are five laws or principles of effective communication in interpersonal communication, in which there is mutual respect, empathy, the message conveyed is easy to understand, open and humble.

Based on this presentation, the author is interested in discussing implementing effective communication principles of REACH communication between account executives and clients. The author wants to know how the application of REACH communication principles by account executives and the effectiveness of the application of REACH communication principles by account executives at advertising agencies to be investigated more deeply.

## **2. RESEARCH METHOD**

The approach used in this study is qualitative, so this research will produce descriptive data in the form of words. According to Creswell, qualitative is an approach to exploring and understanding a central phenomenon. To find out these central symptoms, the authors conducted interviews by asking general and rather broad questions. The results of the information obtained in the form of text or words are collected and analyzed and then the author makes the final results of his analysis which are outlined in the form of a written report (Raco & Semiawan, 2010).

The research method used in this research is a case study According to Creswell, a case study is an exploration of related systems (bounded systems) or cases. With the case study method, the author is expected to capture the complexity of the existing case, and the case must be single and specific. And usually these case studies are done on cases that are unique, important, and useful to readers and society at large. By understanding a case in detail and in depth, the author will capture the importance for the interests of society, organizations or certain communities and can provide useful input for other groups and organizations in solving the problem, the author chooses to use the case study method for this research because the (Raco & Semiawan, 2010). author wants to know more about the problem or how to communicate effectively Account Executive to the client from the point of view of both parties.

The subjects that the author chose in this study are account executives and clients of Doxa Digital because these subjects are individuals who are directly involved in the topic of the problem or activity being studied. because in Rahmadi to determine the subject of research, there are criteria that need to be considered. The subject has long enough, intensively and validly joined the activity or field that is the research study and the subject is fully involved in the field or activity that is the research study. And the object of this study is the implementation of REACH communication in the interaction between account executives and clients.

The method or process of data collection carried out in this study is by interviewing three informants, namely a senior account executive, junior account executive, and client users of digital marketing services of course, these three speakers are related to each other and related to each other. Other data were obtained by the author through observation and documentation.

For data processing techniques in this study, the author uses the Miles and Huberman model which includes 3 stages, namely data reduction which is the stage of reducing or filtering data so that the data obtained is more focused on important things in accordance with the main discussion of the study and discarding data or things that are not needed, then data display namely the stage of presenting data that is useful to provide an overview of research for the author so that the author can know what to do next, and the last stage, namely verification, is the stage of concluding useful data to help explain the results of the research more clearly (Fairus, 2020).

Furthermore, the data validity techniques used by the authors in this study are source triangulation techniques and techniques.

### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In this study, the author conducted a case study on Doxa Digital Indonesia's account executive. Doxa Digital is a creative digital agency that helps businesses grow through digital marketing, creativity & technology. Doxa Digital Indonesia was established in 2002 as a website developer specialist, then pivoted to become a full creative digital agency in 2009, covering website development, creative design, online marketing, video production, and so on.

Doxa Digital has more than 15 years of experience as a website developer in Indonesia and Doxa Digital has also been active in the creative digital marketing world for more than 10 years so it is certainly very experienced in handling and measuring every decision for various digital marketing projects through in-depth and accurate analysis, data and research.

This study, of course, relies heavily on data derived from informants in accordance with the criteria of this research. Here are some informants involved in this research, including:

**Table 1**  
*Informant Criteria*

No	Name	Profession	Role in research
1	Christian Che Sipasulta S. E	<i>Senior Account Executive dan Account Manager Lead Doxa Digital Indonesia</i>	As an informant for the point of view of the <i>Account Executive</i> of the Advertising Agency
2	Lady Jessica	Head of Digital Marketing	As an Informant for the Client's point of view Advertising agency
3	Silvia Sie	<i>Junior Account Executive Doxa Digital Indonesia</i>	As an informant, to help substantiate the statements of other informants

After finding the results or facts from the data that has been obtained from informants, the author has divided them into 2 points of problem identification in this research case, the points of identification of the problem include:

#### *Implementation of Effective Communication by Account Executives to Clients*

In the study, it was found that the communication carried out by the account executive based on the data that the author collected, the account executive acts as a communicator in this interaction and shows itself as a communicator with an audience image where the communicator here will prioritize the interests of the audience or the communicant will try to empathize and understand

the needs and character of the communicant. Furthermore, based on the explanation from Mr. Christian, account executives are classified as paternalism type communicators, account executives or communicators are described as fathers and clients or communicants positioned like children, where the function of the communicator here is to educate and provide information to the communicant, in addition to certain circumstances the account executive can also be classified as a specialization type communicator, where the needs and self-interests of the communicator are known to the public, therefore Mr. Christian stated that account executives must be like chameleons who can quickly adjust to circumstances (Triana, 2017).

Based on the statement, account executives have a great responsibility and role to create positive communication and build positive relationships with clients because account executives are communicators in interactions that occur. implementing effective communication in order to help create positive communication and encouraged by the application of REACH communication principles to simultaneously help build good and positive relationships with clients, through effective communication principles REACH is expected to create a positive relationship and communication atmosphere between account executives and clients.

Based on the data obtained by the author, the application of effective account executive communication requires certain preparations such as conducting research in advance related to the client's company background and finding out the needs of the client so that when interacting with client account executives have sufficient provisions to provide messages or information that is relevant to what the client needs, in addition to this preparation must also be accompanied by the application of REACH communication principles, namely respect, empathy, audible, clarity, and humble. These five principles are certainly very related to one another in the interaction between account executives and clients where it is mandatory to create a relationship of mutual respect that begins with account executives by greeting clients first before interacting, account executives Show empathy to clients by understanding client problems first and providing suggestions and input, and paying attention to audible and clarity aspects when concluding messages, then account executives are also required to be humble to all clients regardless of their company origin. These five principles are important guidelines that account executives must do to their clients to help create positive relationships.

According to the author, based on the theory used, as well as the data obtained, the implementation of effective communication carried out by Doxa Digital account executives has been going well, especially in the use of the REACH effective communication principle. This can be seen from Doxa Digital's fairly good understanding of account executives related to REACH communication principles and the implementation of REACH communication principles which are applied very well in interactions that account executives carry out from the preparation stage to the final stage to clients.

#### *The Effectiveness of the Application of REACH Communication Principles in Supporting the Success of Account Executives to Establish Good Relationship with Clients*

Effective communication is a communication process where the communicant understands what is conveyed and at the same time does what the communicator wants through the message according to Muhith & Siyoto (deep Hidayati, 2020).

And according to Harjana, communication can be said to be effective if it meets the following three conditions, namely the first is (Sofiyah, 2018) the same understanding of the meaning of the message, based on the data found. The author can conclude that the first condition is that the same

understanding of the meaning of the message between the account executive and the client has been fulfilled well, because based on the data the author gets, the account executive always provides a detailed and detailed explanation in accordance with the principle of clarity, then added with the use of several parables to help make it easier for clients to understand the content of the message conveyed, And account executives also do not forget to pay attention to how the bearing, intonation and so on in order to help attract client attention so that clients become more focused.

The next requirement is that the communicant carries out the message voluntarily. Based on existing data. The application of SOPs, the REACH principle, and with a little improvisation is very important to implement, if it is implemented the results and client response will certainly be positive, it turns out not entirely in accordance with the data that the author gets from the client, because the client still considers in advance all messages conveyed by the account executive To be tailored to the needs of the company but so far the average message and advice submitted by the account executive has received a positive response, it can be fairly reasonable because each client has different characteristics.

The last requirement is that the account executive is able to improve the quality of the relationship between and clients. Based on the data obtained, because communication is the basis or main thing that is very concerned by Doxa Digital, the quality of the relationship established between the account executive or Doxa with the client is certainly very good, because based on the data obtained, from the client's point of view states the account executive Doxa is very friendly and can understand the needs of his company. In addition, the author who did the observation directly saw the number of clients who extended and added to their cooperation with Doxa, this is the author's benchmark to assess that the requirements for improving the quality of this relationship have been very fulfilled.

According to the author, the REACH communication principle carried out by Doxa Digital account executives is arguably effective. This can be assessed and proven by the fulfillment of the conditions that determine effective communication. Everything can be said to be done well in the interaction between the account executive and the client, which is judged by the statement the client provides.

In addition, this REACH communication principle has proven to be very helpful in creating effective communication between account executives and clients. Proven by the application of good audible and clarity principles by account executives makes clients understand and grasp the same message meaning in accordance with the message given by account executives, then the application of good empathy, audible, and clarity principles by account executives makes clients understand and moved to follow up on account executive messagesPositively, then the application of good respect and humble principles by account executives creates a good and positive quality relationship with clients.

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

If reviewed in the section of findings and discussions that the author has described, it can be concluded that:

- a) The implementation of effective communication of REACH communication principles carried out by account executives at Doxa Digital has been carried out very well, this is evidenced by a fairly good understanding of account executives of the REACH principle and the application of the REACH principle in interactions between account executives and clients starting from the preparation stage. This can also be seen from how the account executive explains in detail

the examples of the application of each principle of respect, empathy, audible, clarity, and humble to the client and is confirmed directly by the client.

- b) In addition, the effectiveness of the implementation of the REACH communication principle applied by Doxa Digital account executives to clients can be quite effective. This is certainly evidenced by the fulfillment of the requirements for effective communication. And REACH's communication principles have proven to play an important role in helping to meet all these requirements for effective communication and also play an important role in the success of account executives to build positive relationships with clients.

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