

# The Role of Modern Public Relations Strategies in Developing Communication Performance at Service Institutions in Algeria.

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## Abstract

*The present study explores the influence of modern public relations strategies on the communication effectiveness of service institutions. The focus is on the Algerian water and sanitation company SEAAL. The text goes on to address the manner in which these strategies enhance communication in the face of considerable challenges within the water sector. Utilising a goal-oriented methodology, the study discloses that SEAAL adroitly employs integrated communication strategies that prioritise transparency, social responsibility, and technology. The efficacy of these approaches in enhancing the company's mental imagery is a subject that merits further investigation. However, despite SEAAL's endeavours to enhance its public image, further development is required to achieve the intended outcomes. The research emphasises the interconnectedness of public relations strategies and communication performance, and it provides recommendations for future enhancements in the domain of mental imagery.*

**Keywords:** *Modern Public Relations Strategies, Public Relations, Communication Performance, Service Institutions.*

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## Introduction

In the contemporary business environment, characterised by its rapid pace and intense competition, attaining institutional excellence is contingent not solely on the quality of products and the efficiency of services. It is also contingent on the cultivation of trust, the maintenance of a positive image, and the effective management of stakeholder relationships. The field of public relations has evolved from a narrow focus on promotion to a pivotal role in shaping institutional reputation and fostering commitment to social responsibility. In Algeria's service sector, effective communication is vital for crisis management and the fulfilment of sustainable development goals within institutional strategies, particularly in essential areas such as water services.

The study investigates 'Modern public relations strategies in enhancing communication performance of service institutions in Algeria', focusing on the Water and Sanitation Company SEAAL. It aims to clarify the methods utilized by the company to improve both internal and external communication effectiveness, while emphasizing the role of modern public relations in fostering resilience and adaptability in institutions through enhanced communication performance. The contemporary epoch is marked by significant advancements in digital communication technology, leading to new generations of communication.

The integration of technology into daily life has driven societal and institutional transformations, enhancing services in media, science, and administration. Digital media now holds considerable power in influencing institutions, prompting educational and cultural entities to develop strategies to leverage this medium for support and administrative functions. This evolution has intensified competition among institutions, as they aim to increase production and optimize communication performance, a goal central to public relations teams.

Public relations is crucial for developing strategies that contemporary professionals use in the digital landscape. These strategies aim to communicate effectively with various audiences, presenting truthful and accurate information to maintain a positive image. The 'Algerian Water and Sewage Company' (SEAAL) exemplifies this by implementing modern public relations tactics to improve communication and attract a

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wider audience, ultimately seeking to cultivate a new image while averting potential crises. This prompts the following fundamental question:

- **How do modern public relations strategies contribute to enhancing the communication performance of the service organisation, the Algerian Water and Sanitation Company 'SEAAL'?**

This fundamental question gives rise to a number of procedural questions, namely:

1. What are the main modern public relations strategies employed by the water and sanitation enterprise in Algeria, SEAAL?
2. How should SEAAL's communication performance be evaluated?
3. What is the nature of the relationship between the modern public relations strategies applied and the communication performance of the Algerian Water and Sanitation Company (SEAAL)?

### Study Objectives:

- 1- To understand the current situation and future possibilities for implementing modern public relations strategies at Algeria Water and Sanitation Company (SEAAL), as well as to identify the key strategies used by the organization.
- 2- To examine how public relations strategy is applied in a services institution: the Algerian Water and Sanitation Company (SEAAL).
- 3- To investigate whether contemporary public relations strategies can be used effectively in a service institution, focusing on the Algerian Water and Sanitation Company (SEAAL). This inquiry aims to explain how such strategies contribute to public relations in general and in institutions in particular.

### Research Methodology and Tools:

#### Research Methodology:

The methodology is defined as the path that the researcher follows in order to complete any scientific study. As posited by researcher '**Ammar Bouhoush**', the term "scientific research methodology" can be delineated as "a set of general rules that are established for the purpose of obtaining scientific truth, and it is the method that the researcher follows in studying the problem to discover the truth" [1]. **Mouris Angers** defines it as "a collective endeavour to attain knowledge founded on rationality and methodologies that can be substantiated in reality". [2]

The current scientific research endeavour is focused on examining the strategic role of modern public relations in optimising the communication performance of the service institution SEAAL. It is asserted that the most appropriate methodology for this purpose is the case study method, which focuses on studying the behaviour of social units as wholes to arrive at accurate results. [3].

#### Data Collection Tools:

The case study approach utilized diverse data collection tools, primarily focusing on interviews to gather insights from individuals with personal experiences related to the subject matter. Researcher **Farouk Youcef** defines interviews as "face-to-face interaction between two people, one of whom aims to obtain data and information from the other on the subject." [4] Additionally, observation was employed to systematically document the performance of the telecommunications company SEAAL during the study period.

*Defining Concepts and Terms:*

The concept definition stage of research establishes the scientific meaning of the study subject by defining the most salient terms and concepts:

**Strategy:** is a series of determinations that guide an organization toward achieving its primary objectives, tailored to its environment. Alfred Chandler defined it as the process of setting long-term goals, creating actionable plans to reach these goals, and assigning resources to support them. [5]

- Porter defined it in his seminal work "Competitive Strategy" as "the option that an organisation selects regarding its position in the competitive environment and defends with its competitive advantage [6]. It is also important to note that the term encompasses significant and influential organisational decisions that are made with the objective of optimising the entity's capacity to capitalise on opportunities presented by its surroundings, while concurrently implementing the most efficacious strategies to safeguard against potential hazards stemming from its external environment. This pursuit is driven by a desire to attain the organisation's medium- and long-term goals and objectives [7]. Conversely, the concept of strategy is defined as 'the establishment of long-term fundamental goals and objectives of the institution, the selection of action plans, and the allocation of the requisite resources to achieve these goals'. [8]

**Procedurally:** the strategy pertains to the process of establishing the objectives that the institution aspires to accomplish, with a particular emphasis on long-term goals. It encompasses the identification of suitable methods to achieve these objectives and the requisite resources, the determination of the scale of activities and areas for expansion, and the formulation of responses to emergent circumstances related to production inputs and economic conditions, as well as to the actions of competitors.

**Modern public relations strategies:** it has been determined by the book 'PUBLICATOR' that the term signifies a series of significant and autonomous resolutions undertaken by a given institution for the purpose of attaining particular objectives, employing an array of communication channels and technological modalities. It is evident that these activities are also defined as administrative and managerial operations that are conducted in a consistent and methodical manner. The objective of these operations is to foster an environment of understanding and proximity with relevant stakeholders, i.e. the public. while considering the interests of all parties involved. [9]

**Procedurally:** the contemporary public relations strategies employed by various public relations departments are characterised by the strategic implementation of advanced communication technologies and digital media channels, particularly websites, accounts, and social media sites. These strategies encompass a range of administrative decisions and activities that facilitate effective communication with diverse audiences in the digital age.

**Communication performance:** the extent to which an organisation (or individual) effectively and efficiently manages communication with its various audiences in order to achieve the desired objectives of these processes is defined as organisational communication management. The objectives of these processes may include the building of a positive image, the enhancement of trust and credibility, the exchange of information and the guidance of behaviour.[10]

**Procedurally:** procedural communication performance may thus be defined as the effectiveness and efficiency with which communication activities are carried out by the company, as well as the efforts of all its employees in achieving its various communication objectives. The measurement of such performance may be facilitated by a set of quantitative and qualitative indicators within the company's activities.

**The institution:** this term refers to 'a relatively autonomous economic or social organisation in which decisions regarding the composition of human, financial, material and media communication resources are made in order to create added value according to objectives within a given time frame'. [11]

In this study, the term 'institution' is employed to denote a formal body composed of a group of competent individuals who collaborate in accordance with the tasks assigned to each of them, utilising various resources and means to achieve the unified objective of the institution as a whole. This objective is to convey the optimal image and voice to the public.

#### *Conceptual Introduction to Contemporary Public Relations Strategies.*

##### *Concept Of Modern Public Relations Strategies*

Digital public relations can thus be defined as the practice of communication activities through cyberspace and the Internet with a view to establishing effective two-way communication with a variety of Internet users. It is also possible to define this term as referring to a variety of activities that utilise online media, search engines and social media sites as channels of communication and interaction [12]. Researcher Ali Ajwa defines it as 'the general guidelines that address the stages of the battle, which aim to clarify the methods of work in public relations' . [13]

In light of the aforementioned points, modern public relations strategies can be regarded as a series of interconnected methods, plans, and techniques employed by institutions and organisations to communicate and interact effectively with their diverse audiences and stakeholders within the context of a constantly evolving digital and media environment. It is vital to recognise that the overarching aim of these strategies is to construct and fortify a favourable reputation, whilst also cultivating robust relationships. Furthermore, these strategies are implemented with the objective of attaining the organisation's communication and marketing objectives by leveraging digital and interactive tools and platforms to their maximum potential.

##### *Classification Of Contemporary Public Relations Strategies*

The field of public relations has undergone a significant transformation in the age of digital and smart communication. This development has prompted organisations to adopt a range of contemporary strategies to address these changes. The following classification system is proposed for the modern strategies:

##### *Digital Public Relation Strategies*

The implementation of these strategies entails the utilisation of digital platforms and social media to cultivate and fortify relationships with audiences. The objective of this initiative is to enhance the organisation's digital presence, manage its online reputation, and facilitate direct engagement with its audience [14], and this type of strategy includes a set of secondary branches:

- 1. Content creation strategy :** the focus of this endeavour is the creation of valuable and engaging content (articles, videos, infographics, podcasts) that is disseminated across the organisation's digital channels with the objective of attracting audience attention, providing useful information, and fostering a positive image.
- 2. Engagement and interaction strategy:** the strategy under consideration extends well beyond the mere act of publication; it encompasses direct interaction with audience comments, addressing inquiries, and overseeing online conversations. The objective of this comprehensive approach is to foster brand loyalty. [15]
- 3. Online reputation management strategy (ORM) :** this process entails the monitoring of online discourse concerning the organisation, with a view to responding to and enhancing its image, whether through the management of negative or positive content . [16]

##### *Crisis & Reputation Management Strategies*

These strategies are centred on the preparation for potential crises and the effective management of such events when they arise, in addition to the restoration of reputation subsequent to the crisis. The aforementioned strategy encompasses a number of secondary categories, which are outlined below:

**Proactive and preparedness strategy:** The Proactive and Preparedness Strategy constitutes a comprehensive plan whose objective is to ensure the nation's readiness and resilience in the face of potential challenges or threats. This strategy emphasises a proactive approach, emphasising the importance of being prepared and anticipating future events. It is a systematic and well-thought-out plan that is designed to enhance the nation's ability to respond quickly and effectively to any potential challenges or threats. This strategy is predicated on the identification of potential risks, the development of emergency response plans, and the training of communication teams to minimise the negative impact of a crisis before it occurs. [17]

**Transparency and credibility strategy:** this strategy necessitates the provision of honest and transparent communication with all audiences, the dissemination of accurate and regularly updated information, the acknowledgement of mistakes (if any) and the assumption of responsibility. [18]

**Internal communication strategies:** The primary focus of this programme is to cultivate robust relationships and efficacious communication with employees within the organisational structure. Employees are regarded as representatives of the organisation, and the following secondary strategies are employed:

**Empowerment and participation strategy:** is a theoretical framework that aims to facilitate the process of empowering individuals and groups, thereby encouraging active participation in various aspects of society. This strategy is designed to engage employees in the decision-making process, solicit their opinions and suggestions, and furnish them with the information necessary to perform their tasks effectively. [19]

**Organisational culture-building strategy:** this strategy employs internal communication techniques to promote the organisation's values, thereby ensuring consistency and harmony. [20]

**Media relations strategies:** The primary objective is to establish robust and enduring relationships with journalists and media outlets, thereby ensuring favourable coverage and the effective management of media communications. The following types of media relations strategies have been identified:

**Long-term relationship-building strategy:** this necessitates continuous collaboration with the media, ensuring the provision of accurate and pertinent information, and fostering complete credibility in interactions with journalists. [21]

**Media content management strategy:** is a system for the organisation and maintenance of media content. This process encompasses the drafting of press releases, the organisation of press conferences, and the training of designated spokespersons to ensure the articulation of coherent and consistent messages through various media channels. [22]

#### *Characteristics of Modern Public Relations Strategies*

The modern public relations strategy is characterised by a set of characteristics, which are as follows:

**Strategic orientation & proactive planning:** The field of public relations has evolved from a reactive approach to a proactive, strategic management function that is integrated into the broader objectives of an organisation. In the contemporary business environment, public relations are widely regarded as a pivotal component of an organisation's strategic planning framework. It is defined as 'an administrative function that seeks to establish a mutual understanding between the organisation and its various audiences through proactive planning and analysis'. [23]

**Interactivity and dialogue:** In the contemporary context, public relations have evolved to emphasise two-way communication, fostering open dialogue with the public. This shift from a unidirectional dissemination of messages to a more interactive approach has been instrumental in enhancing the effectiveness of modern public relations strategies. This objective is realised through the utilisation of diverse communication channels, which facilitate direct interaction with the public and provide a platform for the articulation of their perspectives and concepts [24]. Consequently, digital platforms facilitate the transition from a linear

communication model to an interactive model, which is the fundamental principle of public relations in the digital age . [25]

**Relationship building focus:** The present-day approach to public relations strategy is to establish and fortify robust, lasting, and dependable relationships with all relevant stakeholders. The fundamental objective of contemporary public relations is to cultivate robust, enduring, mutually beneficial relationships based on trust between the organisation and its diverse audiences. [26]

**Transparency and credibility:** It has been determined that honesty constitutes a foundational element of contemporary public relations strategies, as it is imperative for organisations to maintain authenticity in their interactions with both internal and external audiences, given that 'transparency is not a discretionary measure, but rather an indispensable requisite in present-day public relations practices, as credibility is forged through honesty and clarity in all forms of communication'. [27]

**Measurability and accountability:** Modern public relations strategies are characterised by an emphasis on the measurability of their effectiveness and impact on the organisation's objectives. This emphasis is facilitated by the utilisation of data analysis tools and key performance indicators, which are employed to evaluate the efficacy of campaigns and to substantiate the investment in public relations.

**Adaptability and flexibility:** It is evident that contemporary public relations strategies are distinguished by their adaptability and capacity to evolve in response to evolving circumstances, unanticipated crises, and emergent technologies. This is predicated on the notion that the evolving nature of the work environment necessitates that public relations practitioners adopt flexible strategies that facilitate expeditious adaptation to crises and emerging challenges. This, in turn, underscores the imperative for continuous updating of skills and plans. [28]

**Integration with other communication functions:** In the contemporary context, public relations strategies have evolved to become integrated, with all communication functions operating in unison to achieve the organisation's overarching objectives. It is therefore imperative that there is integration between public relations, marketing and advertising functions in order to ensure consistency of messages and increase their effectiveness in building the overall image of the organisation. [29]

**Levels of modern public relations strategies:** The evolution of public relations management practices has prompted organisations to re-evaluate their strategies within an integrated framework. This framework can be outlined as follows:

**Corporate/strategic level:** Within this paradigm, public relations functions at the senior leadership level, providing strategic counsel to management bodies. The following framework may be adopted for this purpose:

**Corporate reputation building strategy:** the objective is to shape and reinforce a positive mental image of the organisation in its entirety, encompassing its values, culture, and societal contribution.

**Major crisis management strategy:** proactive plans of action must be developed in order to deal with challenges that have the potential to threaten the existence or reputation of the organisation to an extreme degree. This process involves the development and publication of appealing and pertinent content for the organisation's digital platforms with the aim of attracting and engaging the target audience . [30]

**Technical/Specialised level:** The level of specialised skills and techniques required to carry out communication activities is a determining factor in this regard. Furthermore, it is instrumental in ensuring that the messages composed and disseminated are of the highest calibre. The following are illustrative examples of this level: [31]

**Data analysis and artificial intelligence strategy:** the primary focus of this study is the utilisation of data analysis tools, encompassing a range of digital and intelligent applications, to comprehend audience behaviour.

**Influencer Relations Strategy:** in order to ensure the effective dissemination of the organisation's messages, it is essential to harness the influence of key individuals who are prominent within fields that are associated with the organisation's activities, services and products.

#### *Communication Performance and Service Institutions:*

##### *The Concept of Communication Performance*

The concept of communication performance encompasses not only the transmission of information but also the capacity to construct shared signification, exert influence on others, cultivate favourable relationships, and respond adeptly to environmental shifts. Effective communication is characterised by the clarity of the message, which must be comprehensible and free from ambiguity. Conversely, effective communication performance contributes to the establishment of relationships characterised by trust and loyalty between the communicating parties at both the internal and external levels, particularly with regard to improving customer satisfaction or enhancing the work culture. [32]

##### *Types of Communication Performance*

The classification of communication performance may be undertaken according to two distinct criteria: the direction of communication and the nature of the target audience. The following main types are thus identified:

**Internal communication performance:** This refers to the level of communication effectiveness between individuals and groups within a single organisation, including communication between management and employees. The objective of this form of communication is to enhance coordination, facilitate the exchange of information, cultivate a cohesive organisational culture, and motivate employees. Examples of such networks include internal employee networks (Extranet-Intranet). [33]

**External communication performance:** The focus of this study is on the effectiveness of communication between the organisation and its diverse external audience, which includes customers, suppliers, investors, the media, and government agencies. The primary objective of this initiative is to construct a favourable image, promote services and products, manage reputation, and address crises.

**Formal communication performance:** The concept of formal communication performance encompasses the exchange of information that transpires through designated, authorised channels and organisational structures within the institution. Formal communication performance is subject to a set of rules, procedures and systems that adhere to the legal and regulatory framework governing this process. [34]

##### *Communication Functions*

These functions are manifold and encompass a plethora of cognitive, social and psychological dimensions, the most prominent of which are: (Abdul Hamid, 2010, pp. 42–**2.3.1-Informational function:** This function involves providing individuals and entities within the organisation with the necessary information to perform their tasks efficiently and make informed decisions. This information includes strategic objectives, policies and procedures, and market developments.

**Persuasive (influential) function:** The focus of this function is on attitudes, positions and behaviours of individuals being influenced by the building of convictions and the motivation of them to adopt certain ideas or carry out specific tasks. This function is central to marketing, change management, and organisational leadership.

**Coordinating (organisational) function:** The aim of this function is to have workflows organised and harmony between different units and departments within the organisation ensured through continuous communication that ensures alignment of objectives and coordination of efforts and tasks.

**Integrative (expressive) function:** The shapes and the charts should be put at the beginning or the end of the page not in the middle of the text. The title of these shapes or charts should be written just under them.

**Motivational function:** This function depends on making employees more motivated by showing appreciation, encouraging them, giving them useful feedback and communicating in a way that makes them feel good and makes them want to do their best. This will make employees feel more positive and want to come up with new ideas. [35]

### *Characteristics of Communicative Performance*

Effective communicative performance is characterised by a set of characteristics or features that directly influence how a message is received, understood and responded to. The following characteristics have been identified in the relevant sources (Abdul Hamid, 2010, pp. 45-47)

**Clarity:** The communication of effective messages is contingent upon clarity and directness, with the objective of ensuring that the intended meaning is comprehended by the recipient. The provision of clarity has been demonstrated to reduce the likelihood of misunderstanding and increase the accuracy of instructions or responses.

**Intentionality:** The message is directed with a specific and clear purpose, whether that be to inform, persuade or motivate. Communication is not an arbitrary act; rather, it is a directed and deliberate action to achieve a specific goal.

**Reciprocity:** Effective communication is defined as a reciprocal process involving the exchange of roles between the sender and the receiver. This exchange fosters dialogue and ensures a response, thereby transforming communication from a unidirectional act into a dynamic interaction.

**Adaptability:** The effectiveness of communication is contingent upon the capacity of the individual or organisation to adapt messages to the context, situation and target audience. This encompasses the selection of an appropriate style, language and presentation format that aligns with the characteristics of the target audience.

**Interactivity:** The interactivity component of communication performance has been demonstrated to serve as a reliable indicator of the degree of attention and engagement exhibited by the other party in the present moment. Such attentiveness and engagement can be observed and measured through various forms of responses, whether they be verbal or non-verbal in nature.

### *Analysis And Interpretation of Field Study Results and Data*

#### *General Introduction To SEAAL, Water & Sanitation Company*

SEAAL (Société des Eaux et de l'Assainissement d'Alger – SEAAL) is an Algerian public economic institution, a joint-stock company (Spa) established within the framework of the Algerian-French partnership. The primary objective of this institution is to improve and develop drinking water and sanitation services in specific provinces of Algeria, particularly Algiers and Tipaza.

#### *Communication and Sustainable Development Department objectives and tasks of the Water and Sanitation Company SEAAL:*

It is evident that communication has evolved from being a secondary function to a fundamental pillar for achieving strategic objectives. The institution's policy stipulates the following strategic objectives:

**Building and Enhancing the Corporate Image and Reputation:** The objective of this project is to establish a positive image for Sial as a modern, professional and responsible institution committed to providing high-quality public service.

**Building Trust and Transparency:** The establishment of a robust relationship founded upon principles of trust and transparency with all relevant stakeholders, including customers, employees, partners, authorities, the media, and the general public, is of paramount importance.

**Supporting Operational and Commercial Performance:** The organisation facilitates effective communication, thereby enabling the public to comprehend the company's tasks, streamlining customer procedures, and addressing their complaints. This contributes to the realisation of Sial's commercial and operational objectives.

**Achieving sustainable development and social responsibility:** The company has been at the forefront of initiatives in the field of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), integrating these into its core activities. The objective of this initiative is to have a positive impact on future generations and to raise their awareness of environmental issues.

**Crisis Communication Management:** In order to ensure the effective management of crises that have the potential to impact the company's reputation or public trust, it is essential to meticulously prepare in advance and respond in a timely and accurate manner.

#### *Modern Public Relations Strategies Used at SEAAL Company*

In the contemporary business environment, organisations have transitioned from the capacity of merely delivering commendable services to the necessity of forging effective communication channels and cultivating trust with their diverse audiences. This transition signifies a fundamental paradigm shift in strategic priorities, underscoring the growing imperative for organisations to adopt comprehensive, multifaceted approaches to communication and stakeholder engagement. According to Adel Babou, who is the head of the Communication and Sustainable Development Department at the institution, the following public relations strategies are employed at the SEAAL institution (personal interview, 16 April 2025):

#### *Integrated Communication Strategy*

**Integrating Corporate Communication and Social Responsibility:** the directorate's nomenclature is "Directorate of Communication and Sustainable Development", which is indicative of the strategic integration of the cultivation of the corporate image and commitment to corporate social responsibility. The integration process employed by SEAAL Company serves to enhance the credibility of its communication messages by portraying itself as a socially and environmentally responsible entity, rather than merely a service provider.

**Multi-Channel Communication:** SEAAL employs a multi-faceted communication strategy, eschewing the utilisation of a singular channel. Instead, the organisation adroitly navigates a multifaceted blend of conventional and contemporary channels. Digital public relations are defined as the integration of contemporary communication technology with traditional practices, thereby enabling effective control over the implementation of public relations strategies, particularly those of a modern nature.

**Digital Platforms and Social Media SEAAL** are responsible for the management of an active website (with an average of one million monthly visits) and Facebook pages, which are important communication channels that receive messages from citizens (over 2 million followers on Facebook). This extensive digital presence affords her the opportunity to engage directly with a broad audience.

**Traditional Media:** a variety of media, including television, radio and newspapers, are employed to inform customers about service interruptions or to raise awareness.

*Integrated Communication Strategy*

This strategy is employed by the company in order to disseminate reliable information and achieve proactivity in the context of water scarcity. The objective of this study is to emphasise the endeavours of public authorities in safeguarding the image and reputation of the SIAL company, in addition to ensuring the public interest of Algerians is protected. This is due to the fact that SIAL plays a pivotal role in the urban and social transformation of Algiers. The integrated communication model under discussion can be viewed as revolving around three main communication axes:

**Communication Strategy During the Crisis:** amidst the prevailing crisis, effective communication was enabled by enhancing the digitalisation of customer interactions, thereby facilitating seamless and instantaneous communication. This was achieved by establishing four (04) neighbourhood contact pages on Facebook, which served as conduits for both communication and the addressing of customer concerns.

**Strategy for Presence in Neighborhood Committee Groups:** this process entails the integration of social media networks operated by local committees.

**WhatsApp Groups Strategy:** the creation of WhatsApp groups with public and local authorities, as well as representatives from civil society organisations, is a key component of the process. This approach facilitates the rapid identification and response to needs.

**Neighborhood Communication Strategies:** these objectives are pursued through the implementation of strategies aimed at enhancing awareness among civil society and fostering their active involvement in the following domains:

- The establishment of a database comprising 600 contacts is imperative for the effective functioning of neighbourhood committees. This database is to serve as a comprehensive repository of information, facilitating the effective communication of neighbourhood concerns and the subsequent implementation of appropriate measures.
- Six (06) meetings were held with local leaders and committee members during site visits to SIAL company locations. The objective of these meetings was twofold: firstly, to facilitate direct communication with citizens via neighbourhood committees, and secondly, to ensure the reliability of the information provided.
- Two (02) meetings were held with representatives of the Algiers and Tipaza regions.
- A meeting (01) was convened with five associations and organisations that are active in the field of environmental protection.
- A total of four (04) meetings were held with imams and female guides, which brought together 250 imams from the four central states.

**Corporate Communication Strategy:** In addressing the challenges confronting institutional communication for SEAAL Company, a multifaceted approach is imperative. A key strategy entails formulating comprehensive action plans aimed at enhancing efforts to conserve water, with a focus on fostering a culture of water respect and promoting positive, responsible behaviour towards users of water and sanitation networks. Additionally, the digitalisation of customer relationships plays a pivotal role in optimising operational efficiency and strengthening stakeholder relations. In relation to the aforementioned point, SEAAL initiated a campaign to elucidate electronic payment mechanisms and devised a novel invoice format, with the findings of a customer opinion survey being given full consideration. The matter of electronic payment was also discussed, with customers being permitted to settle their bills online, thus exempting them from the requirement to pay the tax stamp fee. A dedicated space was incorporated with the objective of facilitating comprehension of the professions pertaining to water and sanitation.

A range of awareness-raising initiatives have been implemented, including programmes focused on promoting water conservation, in addition to educational campaigns that emphasise social and environmental responsibility.

*Strategy: Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development (CSR & Sustainable Development Focus)*

The objective of this strategy is to address the challenges associated with sustainable development, particularly those pertaining to environmental protection, social participation, and economic development, through the improvement, transfer, and rationalisation of the most energy-intensive hydraulic structures while ensuring their economic effectiveness is maintained. The recent agreement with the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Governorate (CEREFÉ) is an example of such efforts. It has been initiated to promote afforestation by utilising treated wastewater for irrigation and green space maintenance, along with implementing effective waste management practices, including the recycling of paper and plastic. A notable highlight of this agreement is its focus on the marketing of paper waste.

**Media Influence and Circulation Strategy:** The dissemination of these communication lines was achieved through the implementation of a comprehensive 360-degree media plan, with the objective of providing customers with the necessary information and of recruiting multiple teams that would work diligently to enhance service quality on an ongoing basis. The following measures were implemented to this end:

- The editing of over 495 newspaper articles was undertaken.
- The number of articles available for online consultation is 378.
- A total of 360 radio broadcasts with 921 minutes of airtime (equivalent to 15 hours).
- A total of 133 television series, with a cumulative broadcast duration of 781 minutes (equivalent to 13 hours).

The subjects that were most significantly impacted by recent developments included the initiation of an electronic invoice system, the establishment of partnership agreements, the implementation of a distribution program that encompassed multiple seasons, including Ramadan and summer, the organisation of the distribution system during Eid al-Adha, the adoption of electronic payment methods, and the presentation of a comprehensive analysis of water quality.

It is evident that the water quality campaign is still ongoing and is periodic, with assessments conducted on a quarterly basis. The objective of this initiative is to instil confidence in consumers regarding the quality of the distributed water by employing a transparent digital neighbourhood communication model with customers. This model involves the dissemination of information pertaining to the quality of the water produced and distributed in Algiers and Tipaza provinces, with analysis results published on a quarterly basis on the company's official pages and social media platforms.

Furthermore, the institution is planning to implement additional campaigns that will utilise digital public relations strategies to address a range of sensitive topics, including the following: combating illegal connections, debt collection, and the prevention of water waste.

**Digital Audiovisual Communication Strategy:** The water and sanitation company SEAAL has initiated the development of a new website in Arabic and French. This initiative is part of a broader strategy to enhance the company's digital presence and facilitate access to information for its stakeholders. The new website will serve as a platform to showcase the company's digital transformation efforts and provide a comprehensive overview of its activities and services. Additionally, a YouTube channel has been initiated to disseminate a variety of videos pertaining to the company's updates. For this purpose, a digital studio has been established within the company's headquarters. This studio has been equipped with all modern

technologies for producing and recording audio-visual reports and interviews, as well as processing images of employees and work sites to highlight them.

**Public Relations Officer Strategy:** The SEAAL Foundation provides vital services, including water and sanitation, to millions of beneficiaries. The role of public relations is not confined to a specific department or to communication staff with a particular skill set. Instead, the concept is extended to encompass each individual within the organisational structure, irrespective of their role or position.

#### *Modern PR and its Role in Enhancing Communication at SEAAL Company*

It is evident that the communication performance of SIAL is evident as a comprehensive and integrated system that goes beyond simply providing a service to become a strategic driver for building trust and enhancing the corporate reputation. This conclusion is based on information extracted from the communication and sustainable development directorate frameworks at the SEAAL water and development company. This performance is predicated on a strategic integration of corporate communication and social responsibility, which lends credibility to its messages and highlights it as an entity committed to society and the environment. SEAAL utilises a variety of communication channels to address citizen inquiries. These include the direct phone line 1594, which receives calls around the clock, and a substantial digital presence through its website and social media platforms, which boast millions of followers. Additionally, SEAAL employs traditional media to disseminate information. The company has been observed to demonstrate a commendable capacity to respond expeditiously and engage in direct interaction, particularly during periods of crisis. This capability is exemplified by its neighbourhood and digital communication strategies, which are targeted towards neighbourhood committees and local authorities. SEAAL places significant emphasis on transparency, a commitment exemplified by the organisation's regular publication of water quality results. Moreover, SEAAL employs innovative communication strategies to enhance public awareness and promote water conservation. These efforts are facilitated through the implementation of educational and academic programmes that utilise contemporary technologies. It is imperative to acknowledge that SIAL recognises the fundamental principle that 'every employee is 'a public relations worker'. This assertion signifies that the professional conduct and positive behaviour exhibited by each individual employee is of paramount importance, as it serves as a reflection of the company's image. This underscores the notion that Sial's communication performance is the culmination of a concerted effort, both from within and from without the organisation, aimed at cultivating robust and sustainable relationships with all stakeholders.

#### *The Relationship Between Modern PR Strategies and Communication Performance*

This research study explores the correlation between contemporary public relations strategies and the communication performance of the water and sanitation company, SEAAL. The findings indicate a complementary, substantial and direct relationship between these two variables. These strategies are not merely supplementary tools; rather, they are fundamental pillars and driving forces that guide and enhance the efficiency of the company's communication performance. SEAAL's noteworthy performance is evident in its expeditious response to customer concerns, evidenced by its 1594 hotline, which receives over 66% of citizen calls. Furthermore, SEAAL's engagement on digital platforms, reaching two million followers and amassing over one million website visits per month, is indicative of its strategic utilisation of social media for public engagement. SEAAL's commitment to transparency is further exemplified by its regular publication of quarterly water quality analyses, fostering public trust. Moreover, SEAAL's social responsibility initiatives, encompassing awareness campaigns and educational programmes involving over 1,200 students in pedagogical visits, underscore its dedication to environmental stewardship and educational outreach. The efficacy of these strategies is a testament to SEAAL's meticulous and progressive implementation of its strategic initiatives. This relationship can be conceptualised as a reciprocal process of cause and effect; whereby contemporary public relations strategies function as the catalyst that propels communication performance towards enhanced levels. It is imperative to recognise that "every employee is a public relations worker" and that the calibre of each individual's professional performance is directly indicative of the organisation's reputation. This synergy has been demonstrated to result in a tangible enhancement of the company's image, thereby contributing to the strengthening of its position and the

assurance of its sustainability. This is particularly relevant in an environment characterised by mounting challenges, including water scarcity and escalating public expectations.

## Study Results:

The study results concluded with the following observations:

The SEAAL water and sanitation company's main modern public relations strategies are as follows:

- **Integrated Communication:** the integration of corporate communication and social responsibility is achieved through the utilisation of a variety of channels, including Facebook (with a following of 2 million), the website (which receives 1 million visits), and traditional media.
- **Crisis Communication:** this process entailed the enhancement of customer relationship digitalisation, the establishment of four neighbourhood Facebook pages, and the formation of WhatsApp groups with authorities and associations.
- **Neighbourhood Outreach:** the objective of this programme is to raise awareness and engage civil society by means of neighbourhood committees, meetings with neighbourhood heads, deputies, imams and associations.
- **Digital Corporate Communication:** it is imperative to devise strategies that promote water conservation, facilitate the digitalisation of customer relationships (e.g. electronic payments), and elucidate the various professions associated with water.
- **Academic Educational Communication:** the implementation of water awareness programmes utilising digital communication technology in educational institutions (53 schools, 1,200 students) and field visits (treatment plants) has been undertaken.
- **Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development:** the organisation has been instrumental in promoting environmental protection, encouraging the reuse of treated water, managing office waste and promoting blood donation campaigns.
- **Media Impact and Circulation:** the media plan encompassed a comprehensive 360-degree approach, encompassing a total of 495 newspaper articles, 378 internet articles, 360 radio broadcasts, and 133 television programmes.
- **Digital audiovisual communication:** the creation of a new internal website is to be accompanied by the establishment of a digital studio for the purpose of producing visual content.

Every employee must be responsible for public relations. It is imperative to acknowledge that each employee functions as a representative of the company, serving as a conduit between the organisation and its external image. The professional conduct and performance of employees have a direct impact on the company's reputation, underscoring the significance of their role as ambassadors.

Reliance on an influencer marketing strategy The company employs this strategy to draw attention and alert citizens to the necessity of conserving water as a vital resource. This approach is regarded as one of the most recent strategies currently in use, and in the digital reality in which we currently find ourselves, it is imperative to incorporate these influencers in order to achieve satisfactory results.

Evaluation of Communication Performance: With regard to the levels of communication performance at SEAAL, the following strengths can be identified: a wide reach (both digital and traditional), a rapid response to concerns (1594), transparency in the conveyance of information (water quality, distribution programs), and an increasing awareness of social responsibility. In consideration of the unavoidable

challenge of effecting a transformation in water consumption behaviours, and of the necessity to manage elevated public expectations in the context of prevailing resource challenges.

The nature of the relationship between strategies and communication performance. The relationship is complementary and robust, founded on the implementation of contemporary strategies that directly enhance the company's communication performance. In this regard, it is vital to establish trust, expand the scope of influence, enhance reputation, and enable effective responses to challenges.

SEAAAL's use of modern PR strategies is key to running its operations and improving its communication. The organisation develops contemporary plans and programmes to strengthen its relationship with stakeholders and reposition its image.

### **Conclusion:**

The study concluded that the concept of every employee acting as a public relations worker is adopted by Sial, thereby enhancing communication performance both internally and externally. Notwithstanding the challenges posed by water scarcity and the extensive network, the company is committed to upholding public trust. This objective is pursued through the integration of contemporary technological solutions and direct interaction with stakeholders. This outcome represents the tangible implementation of the aforementioned strategies. Despite the absence of a dedicated public relations department, each department within the directorate, or the institution as a whole, plays a role in implementing public relations in all necessary and required ways. In this context, it is imperative to strengthen the "every employee is responsible for public relations" strategy. It is imperative to initiate regular and intensive training and qualification programmes for all employee categories, from field workers to the 1594 hotline staff. The primary objective of these programmes is to refine effective communication skills and to augment awareness of the pivotal role these employees play in shaping the company's image. Furthermore, the establishment of a system of incentives and recognition is recommended in order to honour excellence in dealing with the public.

In order to achieve a more sophisticated level of digital communication, it has become imperative to transcend the limitations of conventional one-way publishing. This can be achieved by facilitating two-way interaction on digital platforms, diversifying visual content to encompass explanatory infographics and engaging awareness videos that elucidate complex processes, and by employing advanced monitoring and analysis tools to proactively manage digital reputation and address rumours in real-time. The enhancement of crisis communication strategies and the effective management of expectations are also of paramount importance. This necessitates the formulation of comprehensive and regularly updated crisis communication strategies, reliance on proactive and transparent communication during scheduled service interruptions to clarify the reasons and durations thereof, and the initiation of realistic and continuous awareness campaigns concerning the water scarcity challenge in Algeria. This approach is conducive to the effective and responsible management of public expectations.

The enhancement of the relationship with the community is suggested as a means of improving neighbourhood and community communication. This enhancement may be achieved through the following measures: first, the expansion and activation of the database of neighbourhood committees and associations; secondly, the organisation of regular community initiatives, such as workshops and open days, to promote direct dialogue; and thirdly, the continuation of the expansion of partnerships with local influencers, imams, and athletes to disseminate the company's trusted messages. Moreover, the handling of sensitive issues necessitates the enhancement of communication with regard to matters such as debt collection and the suppression of illegal activities. This objective can be realised through the implementation of innovative and positive awareness campaigns. These campaigns should underscore the significance of compliance in ensuring the quality and continuity of service. Simultaneously, they should simplify and clarify electronic payment mechanisms and emphasise their benefits for citizens.

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