



Communication Innovation Development to Promote Public Relations for the Liberal Arts Curriculum, Rajamangala University of Technology Suvarnabhumi

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Received 13/05/2025

Revised 13/05/2025

Accepted 15/06/2025

Abstract

Background and Aim: In the digital era, technology significantly influences decision-making among higher education students. Course promotion must therefore adapt to align with the communication behaviors of the target audience. This is particularly true for the Arts Program at Rajamangala University of Technology Suvarnabhumi, which faces challenges related to accessibility and awareness among prospective students. This study aims to (1–2) investigate the current situation, including problems, obstacles, and existing communication strategies and processes; (3) identify key factors contributing to successful program promotion; and (4) develop an innovative communication model that can effectively and sustainably enhance course promotion.

Materials and Methods: This Research and Development (R&D) study was conducted systematically through a mixed-methods approach. Qualitative data were collected via in-depth interviews with 12 key informants—course administrators, faculty members, and public relations officers—and focus group discussions with two groups of high school students to explore their perspectives on current communication practices. The results from this diagnostic phase directly informed the design of communication innovations, incorporating tools such as social media, virtual reality (VR) tours, podcasts, and alumni as brand ambassadors. Five experts assessed the innovation in terms of content quality, suitability, and practical feasibility. A pilot implementation was then conducted with 100 high school students to evaluate their satisfaction and message comprehension. Content analysis was applied to qualitative data, while descriptive statistics were used to analyze quantitative data.

Results: The findings revealed that the existing promotional strategies lacked systematic planning, used limited communication channels, and focused predominantly on one-way communication, with minimal use of interactive digital tools. Public relations personnel showed insufficient understanding of the communication behaviors of the digital-native target audience. Key barriers included staff shortages, limited budgets, and a lack of continuity in promotion. Influential success factors identified included: clear and engaging content (Mean = 4.57, S.D. = 0.51), use of appropriate media channels aligned with audience behavior (Mean = 4.49, S.D. = 0.55), and building a distinctive and trustworthy program image (Mean = 4.43, S.D. = 0.60). Based on these insights, a five-component communication innovation was developed: (1) strategic planning, (2) content and digital tools, (3) brand building and alumni networking, (4) interactive communication, and (5) continuous evaluation. Expert evaluations rated the innovation as “very good” (Mean = 4.72, S.D. = 0.44), while high school participants reported a “very high” satisfaction level (Mean = 4.61, S.D. = 0.48).

Conclusion: The results highlight the need for the Arts Program to transition from traditional to interactive communication strategies that resonate with the digital behaviors of today’s students. The developed innovation, through its strategic integration of modern media and partnership networks, demonstrated effectiveness in improving awareness, engagement, and perceived credibility. Both expert and target group evaluations affirm the model’s quality and practical applicability, indicating strong potential for sustainable use across other university programs.

Keywords: Communication Innovation; Promotion; Arts Program

Introduction

In the digital era, communication in higher education has undergone a profound transformation, particularly in the area of academic program promotion. Institutions are no longer competing solely on curriculum content or academic excellence, but increasingly on how effectively they communicate the





distinctiveness of their programs to prospective students. This is especially critical in an age where digital technologies and social media platforms continuously reshape media consumption patterns, particularly among high school students who are the primary target group for university admissions.

In Thailand, liberal arts programs have faced mounting challenges in attracting student interest. According to data from the Office of the Higher Education Commission (2023), enrollment in humanities and social sciences programs declined by more than 30% over the past decade, with liberal arts degrees among the most affected. While STEM programs have benefited from policy support and clearer career pathways, liberal arts fields are often perceived as less practical, prompting concerns over their long-term sustainability. These enrollment challenges underscore an urgent need to reevaluate how such programs are promoted, especially in terms of communication strategy.

At Rajamangala University of Technology Suvarnabhumi, the Arts Program—despite its academic strengths and successful graduates—struggles with outreach and visibility. Current promotional activities rely heavily on conventional communication formats such as printed documents, static web content, and on-campus events, which fail to resonate with the interactive and fast-paced media habits of digital-native students. Additionally, limitations in human and financial resources, combined with a lack of long-term communication planning, weaken the program's ability to consistently attract and engage prospective students.

Meanwhile, students' preferred platforms—Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube—emphasize immediacy, storytelling, and personal relatability. Formats that incorporate real-life experiences, such as alumni testimonials or immersive virtual tours, tend to generate higher emotional resonance and trust. However, most public relations units in Thai higher education, especially in non-STEM fields, have not fully adopted strategic frameworks for integrating these digital tools. Instead, efforts remain fragmented, ad hoc, and lacking in theoretical grounding. This is a significant gap, particularly given that current research tends to prioritize STEM fields or institutional-level branding, leaving program-level communication in the humanities underexplored.

In response, this research draws from communication innovation management theory, particularly Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations (2003) and perceptual psychology frameworks, to guide the development of an innovation suited to the liberal arts context. The envisioned innovation is not limited to a single tool or platform—it represents an integrated communication system that combines digital content strategy, audience behavior analysis, and interactive media formats. Core elements include social media engagement, VR-based storytelling, podcasts, and alumni as brand ambassadors—deliberately designed to foster emotional connection, credibility, and interactivity.

A literature review reveals a clear gap in innovation-based communication strategies for program-level promotion in Thai higher education, especially in fields that depend more on inspiration and identity-building than on technical outcomes. While some studies explore institutional marketing or new media use, few investigate how such strategies can be systematically applied to liberal arts promotion in a sustainable, theory-informed way.

Therefore, this study aims to develop a communication innovation model that addresses the specific challenges faced by the Arts Program at Rajamangala University of Technology, Suvarnabhumi. The research objectives are: (1) to examine the current status, challenges, and communication strategies in promoting the Arts Program; (2) to explore existing communication processes in the program context; (3) to identify key factors contributing to effective promotion; and (4) to design and propose an innovative, theory-driven communication model that is aligned with the behaviors and expectations of the target audience.

Objectives

1. To examine the current status, challenges, obstacles, and existing communication approaches used in promoting the Arts Program of Rajamangala University of Technology, Suvarnabhumi.



2. To examine the communication processes employed within the Arts Program at Rajamangala University of Technology, Suvarnabhumi.
3. To identify the key factors contributing to the effective promotion of the Arts Program at Rajamangala University of Technology, Suvarnabhumi, to success.
4. To develop and propose an innovative communication strategy to enhance the promotion of the Arts Program at Rajamangala University of Technology, Suvarnabhumi.

Literature Review

The development of communication innovations to support academic program publicity requires a strong theoretical, empirical, and interdisciplinary foundation. In today's dynamic digital landscape, where student engagement is shaped by algorithms, personalization, and immersive content, innovative design must reflect not only traditional communication behaviors but also emerging trends such as AI-driven targeting, automated content delivery, and data-informed public relations strategies. These trends reshape how messages are created, personalized, and delivered to prospective students in real time.

A literature review is therefore essential to synthesize concepts across multiple domains—communication studies, educational psychology, behavioral economics, and digital marketing—to guide the identification of innovation components, the selection of appropriate methodologies, and the design of impact evaluation tools. This chapter introduces five key areas of inquiry: (1) the concept and evolution of communication innovation, particularly as applied in the liberal arts context; (2) public relations and promotional strategies in higher education, with attention to non-STEM challenges; (3) communication theories such as Diffusion of Innovations and Schramm's Model, applied to message design and audience engagement; (4) the role of digital media, including case studies on social media, VR, and user-generated content; and (5) recent international and national research on communication strategies for liberal arts or humanities programs.

The review further integrates insights from case studies in countries such as Japan, South Korea, and the United States, where liberal arts programs face similar enrollment challenges but have adopted innovative communication strategies, including storytelling-based branding, influencer partnerships, and adaptive messaging platforms. In synthesizing these perspectives, this chapter presents an analytical framework tailored to developing a sustainable and relevant communication innovation model for the Arts Program at Rajamangala University of Technology, Suvarnabhumi—one that bridges the gap between institutional goals, digital communication tools, and the decision-making psychology of today's students.

Concept of Communication Innovation

Communication innovation refers to the design or enhancement of processes and mechanisms for transmitting information, aimed at increasing effectiveness with digital tools and modern approaches that can successfully engage and reach the target audience. In the education sector, communication innovation does not only concentrate on broadcasting information, but rather on communicating information to create awareness, knowledge, and motivation through active learners. Kaemmani (2017) summed up aspects of innovation development, which starts with problem finding and goal setting, followed by study of barriers, creating and testing innovations, and then evaluating and making continual changes. In terms of communication technology, according to Chainiran (2010), social media has transformed the role of the audience from passive consumers to content creators who allow two-way communication, recognizing the need to adapt content to suit different target groups of readers, which is a fundamental issue of modern communication innovation.

1. Public Relations Communication in Higher Education

In the context of higher education, promoting academic programs has a critical role to play in communicating the value, strengths, and uniqueness of programs to the target audience in a world characterized by rising competition and diverse learners. As Mekmuangthong and Saengjit (2018) observed among other studies, today social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube are the major sources through which the institution is disseminating its institutional information, which has a strong



bearing on the decision of the students. Meechat (2015) emphasized the importance of ensuring that the communication is “clear, concise, and credible” (p.63), which is an issue affecting a program’s image and trust. This supports the Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) concept that all organizational communications are to be integrated, and thus, the same message set is followed through several media in a systematic way to achieve the highest impact.

2. Relevant Communication Theories and Models

This study uses the concepts of Rogers’ (2003) Diffusion of Innovations Theory and five adaptation stages in society for innovations. Knowledge, Persuasion, Decision, Implementation, Confirmation. Especially during the persuasion and building of trust stages, communication strategies must have the ability to communicate and construct trust. Additionally, Schramm’s Model of Communication points to Communication as a cycle of shared meaning through which the sender and the receiver have the codes (encoding/decoding) and backgrounds of experience, which must align; therefore, focusing on the need to tailor messages to target audiences in terms of language, content, and forms.

3. Digital Media and Strategic Communication

In the digital era, traditional media has taken a back seat to newer forms such as videos, infographics, podcasts, and VR Tours, which have replaced the traditional forms of media because they provide an immersive experience, are more interesting, and stimulate learner participation better. According to research conducted by Aorangsiradkul and Aom-Aree (2018), Gen Z is the most involved with Facebook Fanpages, then YouTube Channels, and institutional websites, preferring informal media that uses an accessible language. Social media also provides strategies like the User-Generated Content (UGC), where students, alumni, or online influencers talk about their experiences with a program, helping to create higher levels of engagement and credibility than a direct promotional message from PR teams.

4. Related Research

Several studies have explored topics related to this research. For example, a study by Kaewsuksai and Juspalo (2013) examined the role of social media in contributing to awareness and shaping students’ decisions about higher education and showed that regular updates, inspirational presentations, and open spaces for student interaction are important ingredients for a successful promotion. In addition, the study conducted by Chainiran (2010) implied that good digital media should support interactivity and create memorable and shareable experiences, and, therefore, media should focus on storytelling, illustrating, applying sounds, and real people can help build emotional connections and motivation.

Conceptual Framework

Based on the review of concepts and previous research literature, this study has designed a conceptual framework that will combine the concept of Communication Innovation with Rogers’ Diffusion of Innovations theory. The framework consists of five main components: Communication strategy planning, production of creative media content, networks and alumni utilization as intermediaries, dissemination through suitable online platforms, and continuous evaluation and improvement.

In this regard, the researcher has created the main aspects of the provided theories, concepts, and research results to build a research framework. This framework will act as a guide to the analysis of data, the arrangement of development, and the assessment of the effectiveness of the communication innovations appropriate for the promotion of the Arts Program at Rajamangala University of Technology, Suvarnabhumi, as can be seen from the following diagram.

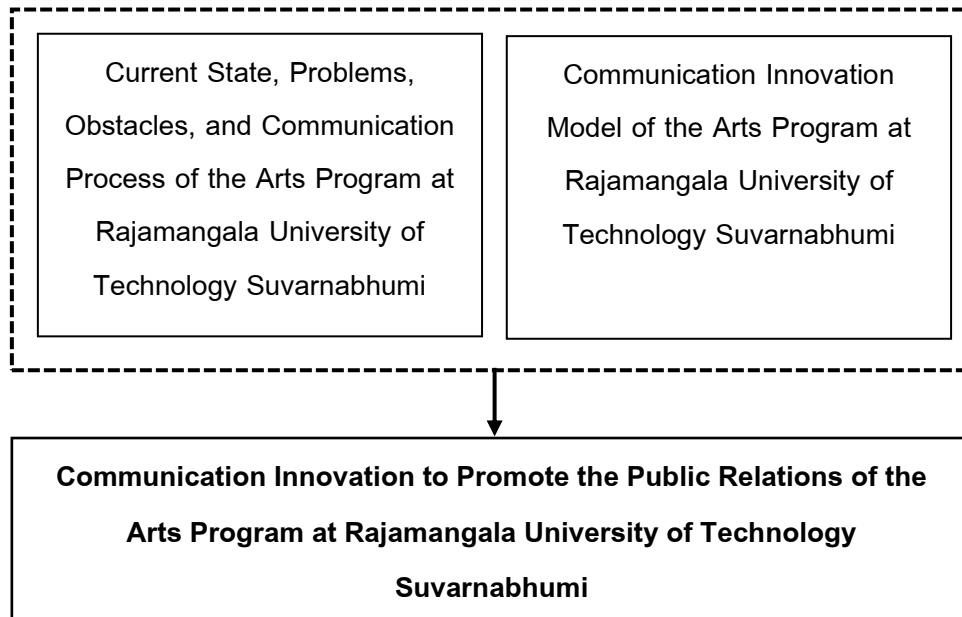


Figure 1 Research Conceptual Framework

Methodology

This research focuses on studying and developing a literature review and proposing a communication innovation to enhance the effectiveness of the promotion of the Arts Program at Rajamangala University of Technology, Suvarnabhumi. The research uses a Research and Development (R&D) approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative methodologies in a complementary way. This mixed methods design enables a comprehensive analysis of existing issues, systematic planning of innovations, and an evidence-based evaluation of outcomes. It is particularly well-suited for research concerning student behavior and real-life communication processes.

The research can be presented in three key stages: (1) analysis of the current state, problems, obstacles, and communication processes of the Arts Program that will serve as a basis for designing the innovation, (2) designing, developing, and creating a prototype of the communication innovation that meets the requirements of the target audience, and (3) testing and evaluation of the developed innovation on a real-world implementation basis. Data has been assembled using the various methods, which include: questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups. Their tools' quality and academic reliability are strictly checked.

The research also has two sample groups - Internal and External participants. Administrators of the program, faculty who work on the program, staff for public relations, already enrolled students in the program, and high school students who are potential enrollees. There was a total of 300 respondents chosen for Stratified Random Sampling to fully represent all minor groups; meanwhile, the qualitative sample was selected with Purposive Sampling, which is appropriate for collecting in-depth data from key informants directly engaged with communication and public work.

The instruments used for data collection are a questionnaire and focus group discussions. The questionnaire was divided into three sections: Demographic details of the respondents, Awareness regarding the channels and content of the program's public relations, and evaluation of the "Samamutala" public relations approach. Content validity was verified by three experts, with an Item Objective Congruence (IOC) from 0.80 to 1.00, which shows excellent quality. Further, the Reliability of the



questionnaire was determined using Cronbach's Alpha, and obtained a value of 0.89, showing high Reliability. The Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were a key qualitative method, designed based on communication and public relations frameworks. The participating groups were high school students, alumni, and public relations staff. All sessions were audiotaped, transcribed, and analyzed using the method of Content Analysis. For qualitative data analysis, Descriptive Statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation) were applied to observe trends and the level of opinions concerning the program's public relations efforts. Qualitative data were analyzed using the 6C Analysis Technique, which included processes of categorizing concepts, classifying, and synthesizing findings to fit the research objectives.

To evaluate the quality of the developed innovation, the researcher created a team of 5 specialists who evaluated the innovation using a custom-made evaluation form. The assessment focused on three main areas: (1) the content appropriateness, (2) clarity of communication strategy, and (3) feasibility of implementation. The evaluation results were analyzed by Descriptive Statistics to display the quality level of the given innovation in each area.

Furthermore, the communication innovation was implemented on an outside target group of 100 high school students who watched the developed content and were evaluated on their understanding, interest, and perceived credibility using a Rating Scale Questionnaire. This provided a concrete reflection on the effectiveness of the innovation.

Finally, the researcher followed ethical research practices of conducting consent was sought from all participants before they partook in the study, and maintaining confidentiality of all participants from the beginning of gathering data through to its collection, especially when data were qualitatively collected, where there was also an involvement of audio recordings and transcriptions. This guarantees the credibility of research findings on both aspects of data accuracy and ethical considerations.

Results

The findings of the study are to explain the results achieved through following the research seeking the four objectives, which have been established in sequence, accompanied by the statistical analysis and the qualitative synthesis of the data collected from the sample group and the relevant informants. The findings of the research contain four main sections as follows:

1. Findings on the current situation, problems, obstacles, and communication methods of promoting the Arts program

The analysis of quantitative data from 300 respondents revealed a significant communication gap in promoting the Arts Program. Specifically, 72.3% of the sample reported that they had not encountered any program content on social media, despite the widespread use of platforms like Facebook, TikTok, and Instagram among the target demographic. Additionally, 61.0% of respondents found the university's public relations efforts unengaging, citing content that lacked appeal or relevance. These trends are summarized in Table 1, which outlines the main sources through which students received information.

Table 1 Proportion of Respondents' Opinions on Information Awareness Channels

Information Awareness Channel	Number of Respondents (People)	Percentage (%)
University Website	183	61.0
Social Media (FB, IG)	83	27.7
Printed Media/Posters	34	11.3

These results indicate an over-reliance on traditional one-way channels, such as university websites and printed materials, while interactive, student-centric platforms remain underutilized. From a communication innovation perspective, this lack of engagement through social media reflects a missed



opportunity for dialogue, co-creation of meaning, and community building, which are essential components of modern public relations in higher education.

The study also identified critical institutional barriers that hinder the adoption of more dynamic and innovative communication practices. As detailed in Table 2, the top obstacles include a lack of digital communication personnel (66.4%), an insufficient budget for media production (58.2%), and a lack of systematic evaluation of public relations activities (42.5%).

Table 2 Key Problems and Obstacles in Promotion

Problem Area	Percentage (%)
Lack of personnel with digital expertise	66.4
Lack of budget for media production	58.2
Lack of public relations evaluation	42.5

According to the data presented in Table 2, the most commonly cited challenge was the lack of personnel with digital communication expertise (66.4%). This was followed by budget limitations for media production (58.2%) and the absence of public relations evaluation mechanisms (42.5%). These limitations were reported as key factors contributing to the inconsistency and inefficiency in current promotional activities.

Data from focus group discussions further confirmed that course administrators and public relations staff acknowledged the importance of effective communication. However, they also indicated that the program currently lacks operational guidelines and a structured long-term communication plan. These findings suggest the need for systematic support in terms of personnel development, resource allocation, and planning to enhance the program's communication efforts.

2. Findings on the Communication Process of the Arts Program

Data from in-depth interviews and questionnaires revealed that the communication activities of the Arts Program are largely ad hoc, typically occurring around specific events such as Open House, school guidance visits, and the distribution of printed materials. These actions are not part of a sustained or systematic communication strategy.

Several interviewees confirmed that communication decisions are often made in response to immediate needs rather than long-term planning. One participant noted, "We only start preparing when an event is approaching—there's no yearly plan." This reflects a reactive approach that may hinder consistent audience engagement. Table 3 below presents the average frequency of promotional activities conducted in the past year.

Table 3 Frequency of Program Promotion Activities in the Past Year

Activity Type	Number of Times (Average per Year)
Open House	2 times
School Guidance	3 times
Production of Printed Media	1–2 times

These limited and episodic efforts suggest insufficient frequency to build strong brand awareness. From a communication theory perspective, this approach contrasts with Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC), which advocates for consistent and ongoing messaging across platforms. Moreover, the lack of strategic planning and evaluation mechanisms limits opportunities for audience feedback and adaptive improvement. Developing a continuous communication framework would not only enhance visibility but also represent a step toward innovation and more proactive public relations.

3. Findings on Factors Promoting the Success of Public Relations for the Arts Program

From quantitative data analysis, it was revealed that factors determining the effectiveness of public relations are categorized into five main sections, as presented in Table 4



Table 4 Mean and Standard Deviation of Factors Promoting Program Public Relations Success

Factor	Mean	Standard Deviation (S.D.)
Clarity of Content	4.57	0.51
Use of Credible Personnel	4.52	0.48
Appropriateness of Media Channels Chosen	4.49	0.55
Use of New Media (VR/Podcast)	4.46	0.50
Interaction with the Target Audience	4.39	0.53

Clarity of content was rated highest, reflecting the importance of simple, relatable messaging, often using storytelling suited to liberal arts themes. Credible personnel, such as alumni, added authenticity and trust, showing how human voices are innovatively used in communication. New media like VR and podcasts were seen as engaging and modern, especially by younger audiences. Channel appropriateness highlights the strategic use of platforms like TikTok and Facebook, while audience interaction, through live chats or Q&A, supports a shift toward two-way engagement. Low standard deviations across all items indicate strong agreement. These factors, identified from both data and literature, reflect the core of communication innovation in this context.

4. Findings on the Development and Evaluation of the Communication Innovation to Promote the Arts Program Public Relations

Each evaluation criterion was rated by five experts who reviewed and tested the developed communication innovation. The overall assessment was classified as "very good." The detailed results for each evaluation are presented in the table below.

Table 5 Evaluation of the Communication Innovation Quality by Experts

Evaluation Area	Mean	Standard Deviation (S.D.)
Content Appeal	4.80	0.39
Appropriateness for the Target Audience	4.75	0.41
Clarity of Strategy	4.68	0.47
Feasibility for Real-World Application	4.65	0.49
Overall Mean	4.72	0.44

As reported in Table 5, all aspects of the designed communication innovation received a "very good" rating from five experts in public relations, digital media, and higher education communication. The innovation was found to be highly engaging in content and well-aligned with the behaviors and expectations of the target audience. Expert feedback also highlighted the model's strength in integrating modern tools such as social media, VR, and influencer strategies, which enhance both reach and relevance. These evaluations confirm that the innovation effectively fulfills its intended public relations functions in real-world applications.

Based on the findings, a communication innovation model has been developed to support the promotion of the Arts Program. The model is built on a systematic planning process and is designed to be flexible and adaptable across various communication contexts. Its structure incorporates a feedback loop at the final stage, enabling continuous monitoring, audience-based adjustment, and responsiveness to shifting trends. This built-in adaptability is a key feature of communication innovation management. The five interconnected components of the model are illustrated in the diagram below.

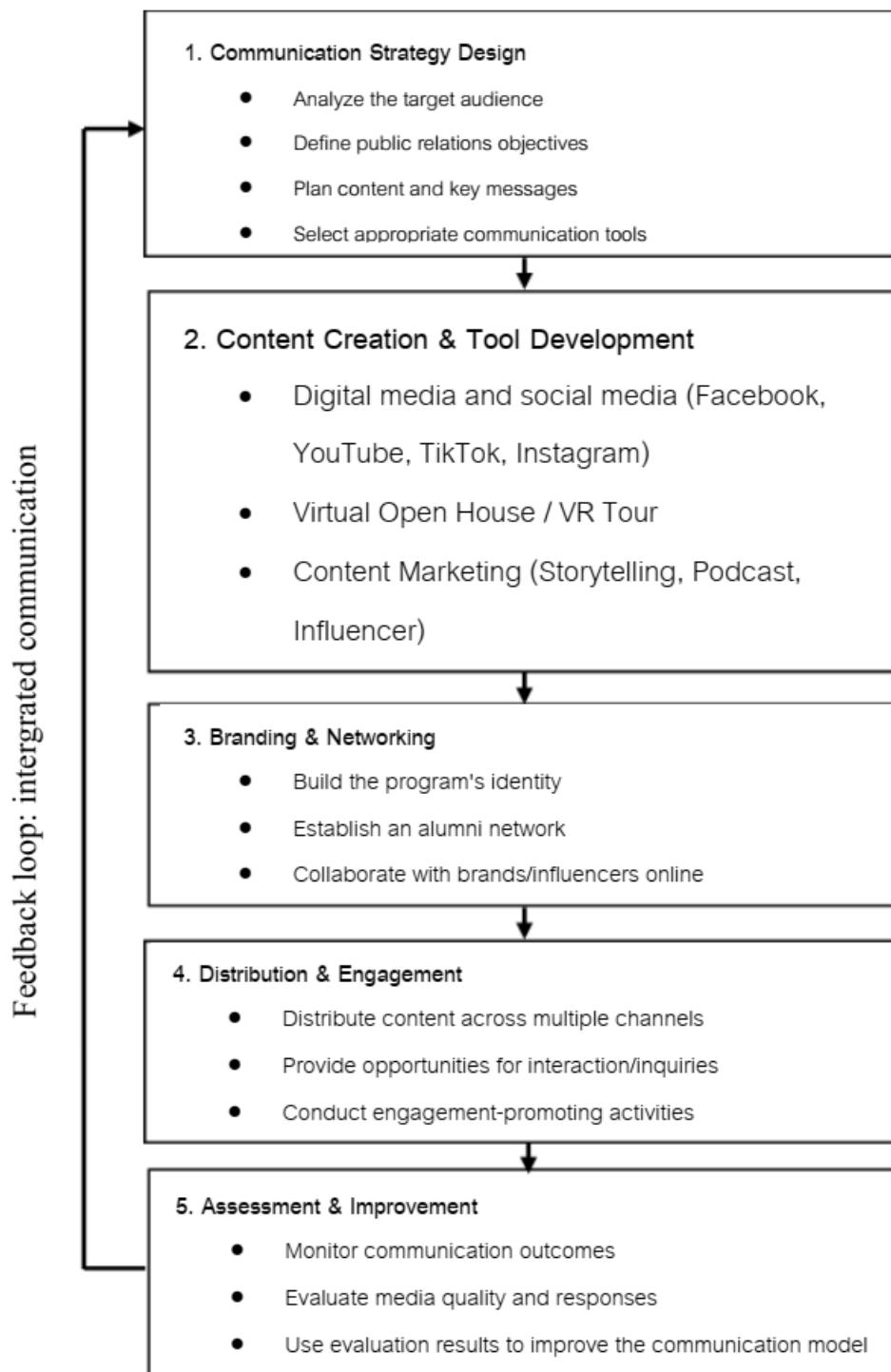


Figure 2 Communication Innovation Model for Promoting the Arts Program Public Relations at Rajamangala University of Technology, Suvarnabhumi

To provide a deeper understanding of each part of the model and how they function together, the interrelationships and sequence of operation are explained in the following:



Rajamangala University of Technology Suvarnabhumi Public Relations Promoting Arts Program Communication Innovation Model is a strategic framework developed through systematic field research. It focuses on creating an effective and adaptive communication process aligned with the media consumption behaviors of today's digital-age audience. The model is designed to achieve the core objective of raising awareness and supporting informed decision-making regarding higher education enrollment.

First, Communication Strategy Design, this foundational step initiates the public relations process by conducting an in-depth analysis of the target audience, focusing on demographics, interests, preferred communication channels, and social behaviors. It also involves clearly defining the objectives of the campaign, such as increasing awareness, highlighting the strengths of the program, and persuading prospective students to consider enrollment. At this stage, key messages are developed, and appropriate communication tools—including videos, websites, and live engagement events—are identified.

Second, Content Creation & Tool Development, the emphasis is on developing content in terms of both messaging and format to ensure it is contemporary, engaging, and effective in reaching the target audience. Innovative tools include virtual tours that showcase the program environment, alumni orientation videos, educational podcasts, and influencer collaborations with figures popular among high school students. A critical strategy is the use of alumni as brand ambassadors, which adds authenticity and relatability to the communication efforts.

Third, Branding & Networking, focuses on establishing a strong and clear program identity, highlighting its academic strengths, career pathways, and unique learning experiences. It also includes building strategic networks with alumni, partner schools, and influential external collaborators. These networks play a vital role in extending the program's reach and creating emotional connections with prospective students through trusted and familiar voices.

Fourth, Distribution & Engagement, the goal is to distribute the created content through the most relevant platforms, such as Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, and the program's official website. More importantly, the strategy emphasizes audience engagement, encouraging interaction through live Q&A sessions, feedback events, surveys, and signup opportunities. These initiatives not only foster interest but also create a sense of community and connection with the program.

Lastly, Assessment & Improvement, this step ensures the continuous enhancement of communication efforts. It involves systematic evaluation using both quantitative metrics (e.g., reach, shares, engagement rates) and qualitative insights (e.g., perceptions, interest, and comprehension among the target audience). The feedback gathered is used to identify strengths and weaknesses, allowing for strategic adjustments and ensuring the model remains responsive to the evolving communication landscape.

In conclusion, Rajamangala University of Technology Suvarnabhumi's Communication Innovation Model for Promoting the Arts Program Public Relations is a dynamic, iterative system. It incorporates a feedback loop that enables ongoing adaptation and refinement of communication strategies, with the ultimate aim of increasing student inquiries and building a sustainable, positive reputation for the Arts Program over the long term. Results of the Trial Use of the Innovation with a Group of 100 High School Students

Table 6 Results of the Trial Use of the Innovation with the Target Group

Indicator	Mean	Standard Deviation (S.D.)
Understanding of the program increased	4.63	0.49
Interest in applying for the program	4.58	0.51
Credibility of the content	4.60	0.46

As reported in Table 6, the trial implementation of the communication innovation with a sample group of high school students demonstrated a significant increase in awareness, interest, and confidence in the Arts Program. These results highlight the effectiveness of the communication model in delivering



targeted messages that resonate with the intended audience. The findings confirm that the model has strong potential to influence the perceptions and decision-making behaviors of prospective students, thereby supporting its value as a strategic tool for public relations in higher education. Both the quantitative and qualitative findings of this study show that the current public relations for the Arts Program at Rajamangala University of Technology, Suvarnabhumi, face several limitations. These include the continued methods of communication, a lack of strategic planning, and ineffective engagement with target audiences. However, the research identifies key success factors for improving public relations outcomes: notably, the clarity of content, the use of credible role models, and the application of multi-format electronic media, particularly those that allow for active audience participation, such as storytelling videos and live online events. The development and trial implementation of a communication innovation model grounded in these principles demonstrated a significant improvement in audience comprehension, interest, and intent to enroll in the program. These results affirm that a strategically designed innovation can serve as an effective and sustainable promotional tool for academic programs, particularly within the evolving landscape of higher education in contemporary Thailand.

Discussion

The purpose is to interpret and contextualize the findings of the study about the four research objectives. This is accomplished by connecting the results with relevant theories, conceptual frameworks, and insights from both national and international studies. The discussion highlights similarities and differences between the current findings and previous research and explores the theoretical and practical implications for enhancing communication strategies used in the promotion of academic programs within the context of higher education.

Objective 1: To examine the Current Condition, Issues, Challenges, and Communication Styles of the Public Relations for the Arts Program

The study found that current public relations practices of the Arts Program rely mainly on one-way communication through traditional channels such as the university website and printed materials. These approaches do not support interaction or relationship-building with prospective students. As referenced through the Shannon and Weaver (1949) model, effective communication requires both message transmission and feedback; thus, the lack of two-way platforms limits meaningful engagement.

Moreover, survey data showed that many students had not encountered the program's content on social media, highlighting a mismatch between current communication practices and the media habits of today's students. This reflects the limited integration of digital tools in public relations efforts.

Structural challenges further constrain communication effectiveness. These include a shortage of staff with digital expertise and insufficient budgets for media development. These issues align with Kotler and Armstrong's (2018) assertion that modern marketing in higher education requires both strategic vision and digital capabilities. The findings also support Phuttharak's (2021) observation that many Thai universities lack systematic communication planning. Together, these results point to an urgent need for modernization, long-term strategy development, and investment in digital communication capacity.

Objective 2: To examine the Arts Program Communication Process

The study revealed that the Arts Program's communication process remains rooted in traditional, event-based methods such as school guidance visits and Open House events. These activities are implemented without long-term planning or data-driven assessment. This reactive, ad-hoc approach contrasts with the Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) framework proposed by Belch and Belch (2014), which emphasizes consistency and strategic coordination across all communication efforts to shape a unified and stable brand image.

In addition, the absence of evaluation mechanisms—such as data on audience reach, engagement, or perception—reflects a gap in the use of digital analytics. According to Chaffey (2022), ongoing data analysis is essential for optimizing communication strategies. The lack of such tracking systems suggests



limited analytical capacity and underuse of digital tools within the program's public relations operations, highlighting a need for more systematic and evidence-based communication planning.

Objective 3: To Identify the Factors Supporting the Success of the Public Relations of the Arts Program

The author's analysis of quantitative and qualitative data revealed several factors contributing to effective public relations. These factors include message clarity, the presence of credible spokespersons, and the use of media channels that resonate with the target audiences' behaviors. This section effectively links these findings to Strong's AIDA Model (1925), which posits that effective communication must capture Attention, sustain Interest, generate Desire, and ultimately prompt Action. The author notes that employing alumni as brand ambassadors made the program's messaging feel more relatable and trustworthy compared to more formal communication methods.

Additionally, this section mentions that communication formats such as virtual tour videos and storytelling-based podcasts were found to enhance audience understanding and engagement. The author aligns this with the insights of Heath and Heath (2007), who argue that truly memorable messages must be both clear and engaging. This section concludes that these findings underscore how the quality of content and the chosen methods of communication significantly influence emotional engagement, trust-building, and decision-making processes among potential students.

Objective 4: To develop and propose an innovative communication strategy to enhance the promotion of the Arts Program

The author presents findings from the development and testing of a communications innovation, which was grounded in field data and theoretical principles. This section demonstrates that integrating digital strategies with creative content elements significantly improves the effectiveness of public relations for the Arts Program. The author specifies that this is particularly evident in increasing awareness, generating interest, and building trust among the target audience. The author introduces a model built on five core components: communication strategy design, content and tools, branding and connections, distribution and interactions, and evaluation and adjustment. This section collectively describes these components as forming a "Communication Ecosystem." The author explains that this ecosystem aims to extend beyond simple message transmission, incorporating audience connection, interaction, and feedback mechanisms.

This section aligns the proposed innovation model with Kotler, Kartajaya, and Setiawan's (2021) concept of Marketing 5.0. The author notes that Marketing 5.0 emphasizes leveraging technology to create human-centric experiences. This section finds this particularly relevant for engaging Gen Z, the primary target demographic in this study, who typically prefer short, easily digestible content formats and often make decisions based on emotional factors. Consequently, the author suggests that delivering content through podcasts and short-form videos on platforms like TikTok and YouTube Shorts is a highly appropriate strategy. This section also notes that expert evaluations rated the innovation as "very good" concerning content relevance and alignment with the intended audience's behaviors, thereby confirming the model's practical applicability. The author further suggests that the model has the potential for adaptation across other university programs facing similar promotional challenges.

This section posits that the study contributes to the field of Educational Marketing Communication by proposing an innovation model that is both systematic and responsive to the behaviors of learners in the digital age. The author claims it extends Integrated Communication theory to the program level, an area described as relatively underexplored in the Thai higher education context. From a practical standpoint, the author suggests the model offers a strategic framework for designing public relations initiatives across university programs, especially those operating in highly competitive student recruitment markets. Key recommendations highlighted by the author include encouraging alumni involvement, utilizing diverse media channels, and implementing robust evaluation systems to support adaptive and resource-sensitive communication strategies.



Conclusion

The study "*Communication Innovation development to Promote the Public Relations of the Arts Program at Rajamangala University of Technology Suvarnabhumi*" focuses on the importance of establishing an efficient and strategic communication system at the program level. Such a system is essential for effectively connecting the university with its various audiences. The Arts Program serves as a key platform for communicating the university's identity, vision, and values to students, parents, and the broader community. Effective public relations at the program level is not only about the general information but also about building a strong impression that directly influences students' decision-making in the context of today's digital age.

The research found that the current public relations efforts remain on traditional communication strategies, which fail to reflect the media consumption behavior and media consumption patterns of modern audiences, particularly high school students, who are the primary targets for university admissions. Data from the sample population indicated a heavy reliance on conventional channels such as websites and printed posters, while social media platforms remain significantly underutilized. Additionally, the study uncovered several internal challenges, including limited human resources, budget constraints, and a lack of structured communication processes. Public relations activities at the program level are largely ad hoc, typically conducted in response to occasional events such as Orientation Days, Open House sessions, or small-scale internal gatherings. In-depth interviews revealed that staff members lacked a long-term communication strategy and did not incorporate digital tools or data analytics to guide content creation or enhance communication efficiency.

However, the study identified several factors that contribute to successful public relations, which can inform the development of an effective communication plan. These include message clarity, credibility of the communication, appropriate channel selection based on audience behavior, and the use of innovative content formats such as virtual reality and storytelling. The findings emphasize the importance of deeply understanding the target audience and adopting interactive communication methods that are more engaging than purely informational approaches. The communication innovation developed in this study integrates strategic planning with modern technological tools. The researcher designed a model consisting of five components: (1) communication strategy design, (2) content creation and tools, (3) branding and networking, (4) distribution and audience engagement, and (5) continuous evaluation and refinement. This model was highly praised by experts for its relevance and practicality, and its pilot implementation demonstrated strong potential. Participants in the study showed improved understanding of the program, increased interest in applying, and a more positive perception of the program's image.

Recommendations

Recommendations of this study

1. Departments within the Arts or related departments should apply the research findings to develop a strategic communication plan. This includes systematically analyzing the target audience, identifying communication channels aligned with audience behavior, and creating innovative content formats such as virtual reality (VR) tours and podcasts.

2. A dedicated communications team should be established within the program, consisting of members with expertise in both educational marketing and digital technology. This team will be crucial for ensuring effective communication, execution, and long-term management.

3. It is recommended to foster partnerships with alumni, external organizations, and companies that can serve as advocates for the program. These stakeholders can support public relations efforts and help disseminate program information through diverse media formats.

4. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of communication activities should be implemented. This should include the use of online analytics tools to track metrics such as reach, engagement levels, and actual conversions. Insights gained can then be used to refine and enhance future communication strategies.

Further Research Suggestions



1. The scope of future research should be expanded to include academic programs across various disciplines and institutions with different educational contexts. This would allow for comparative analysis to identify the most effective communication strategies in diverse environments and contribute to a broader understanding of public relations practices in Thai higher education.

2. Longitudinal experimental studies should be conducted to assess the impact of communication innovations over time. These could include measuring changes in enrollment rates or improvements in program comprehension following the implementation of new public relations media.

3. Further research should investigate the integration of emerging technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Big Data Analytics, and Machine Learning, to analyze audience behavior and evaluate the effectiveness of communication content in greater depth. This would enhance the precision of future communication strategy development.

4. Further research should compare the content of public relations messages with the actual learning experiences of students who enrolled in the program after being exposed to those communications. Gaining insights from these students' perspectives would contribute to improving both communication strategies and the overall quality of the program.

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