



Marketing Communication Strategy In Promoting The Train Ticket Discount Program During The Eid Season In 2025 (Study on Passenger Transportation Marketing and Customer Care Unit PT Kereta Api Indonesia Persero Divre III Palembang)

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Article Info

Article history:

Received 02 Oct, 2025

Revised 21 Nov, 2025

Accepted 27 Dec, 2025

Keywords:

Marketing Communication,
Integrated Marketing
Communication (IMC), Eid
Ticket Discounts, PT KAI
Divre III Palembang

ABSTRACT

Marketing communication strategies play an important role in increasing customer interest and loyalty, especially at the moment of Eid which is synonymous with high public mobility. PT Kereta Api Indonesia (Persero) Divre III Palembang through the Passenger Transportation and Customer Care Marketing Unit implements a marketing communication strategy to promote the 2025 Eid ticket discount program. This study aims to analyze how the strategy is designed and implemented in order to attract public attention and increase the number of passengers. The research method used is qualitative descriptive with data collection techniques through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. The results of the study show that marketing communication strategies include the stages of message planning, target audience determination, media selection, and evaluation of promotional effectiveness. PT KAI optimizes various communication channels such as social media, official websites, the Access by KAI application, as well as collaborations with online travel agents to expand the reach of information. The application of the Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) theory can be seen from the integration between channels that produce consistent messages and strengthen the company's positive image. This strategy has proven effective with an increase in the number of Eid 2025 passengers to 99,039 people with an occupancy rate of 150%, an increase of about 20% from the previous year. Overall, an integrated and adaptive marketing communication strategy has succeeded in increasing the effectiveness of promotions and strengthening customer loyalty to PT KAI Divre III Palembang's services.

INTRODUCTION

PT Kereta Api Indonesia (Persero) is a State-Owned Enterprise (SOE) company engaged in railway transportation services in Indonesia. As a state-owned enterprise, PT KAI has a responsibility not only in the commercial aspect, but also in providing safe, comfortable, and affordable public transportation services for the wider community. The company has a vision to become the best transportation ecosystem solution for Indonesia, with a mission to provide a safe, efficient, digital-based, and rapidly growing transportation system (Elfari Scha Pramyastiwati et al., 2013).

Eid is always an important moment for Indonesian people to gather with their families in their hometowns. The tradition of going home is an inseparable part, and this has a direct impact on the surge in transportation needs, including trains. PT KAI seeks to provide solutions, one of which is by presenting a train ticket discount program during the Eid season. This program aims to help people get tickets at more affordable prices and attract more users to choose trains as a safe and comfortable mode of transportation. On the other hand, the Eid season also brings operational challenges for PT KAI's bags. The company's focus is divided between intensive operational management and the implementation of communication strategies. This can lead to less than optimal delivery of promotional information to the public. Good coordination between Passenger

Transport Marketing Unit and Customer Care with operations it is very important to ensure the smooth running of the company's external communication (Dwi Wulandari & Suriana, 2022).

Table 1 Number of Passengers on the Divre III Eid Homecoming Train

Year	Number of Passengers	Occupancy Rate	Remarks
2022	53.730	102%	Eid 2022 transportation passengers
2023	39.105	Not mentioned	Decrease in the number of passengers compared to 2022
2024	69.950	Not mentioned	An 18% increase compared to 2023
2025	99.039	150%	20% increase compared to 2024, peak increase

Source: Data processed by researchers, 2025.

Ahead of the Eid homecoming season every year, the government together with various transportation mode providers in Indonesia, including PT Kereta Api Indonesia (Persero), actively present a fare discount program as one of the strategies to reduce the burden on the community and regulate the smooth flow of homecoming. In 2025, PT KAI (Persero) will provide a price discount of up to 25% for a number of commercial long-distance trains, which will be valid in the period of April 5–9, 2025 (homecoming flow) and April 14–17, 2025 (return flow).

A marketing communication strategy is a series of plans and actions that are systematically designed to support the achievement of promotional goals. In this context, the main goal is for the public to know about the existence of a train ticket discount program during the 2025 Eid season and to be encouraged to take advantage of these services. This strategy not only emphasizes on the content of promotional messages, but also includes the selection of effective communication media, the determination of the right delivery time, and the segmentation of the audience according to the characteristics of the railway service user community. Through planned and structured communication, the Passenger Transportation and Customer Care Marketing Unit of PT Kereta Api Indonesia (Persero) Divre III Palembang seeks to form a positive image of the company while increasing public participation in utilizing the discount program.

Considering the complexity of the challenges and the importance of communication strategies in supporting the success of this promotional program, it is important to examine how the Passenger Transportation and Customer Care Marketing Unit of PT KAI Divre III Palembang designs and implements a communication strategy in promoting the train ticket discount program in the 2025 Eid season.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses the Qualitative to explore an in-depth understanding of Marketing communication strategies in the Passenger Transport Marketing unit and Customer Care PT Kereta Api Indonesia (Persero) Divre III Palembang in promoting the ticket discount program in the 2025 Eid season. This approach allows researchers to analyze how messages are structured, the media used, as well as how audiences respond to those messages. An effective communication approach must not only be informative, but also able to build emotional engagement with the audience so that the message can be received and understood to the maximum. Using a qualitative approach, this study aims to explore the meaning contained in each communication element used by the Passenger Transportation Marketing unit and Customer Care PT KAI Divre III Palembang in conveying messages to the public, so that it can provide insight into the effectiveness of such communication in the existing cultural and social context (Putri, 2016).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion, it can be concluded that the marketing communication strategy in promoting the 2025 Eid train ticket discount program at the Passenger Transportation and Customer Care Marketing Unit of PT KAI (Persero) Divre III Palembang has been running effectively and planned. Promotional efforts are carried out through careful planning, setting the right target audience, and utilizing digital and conventional communication channels to expand the reach of information. In addition, the use of the Access by KAI application is also the main medium in disseminating information and interacting with customers, thus supporting the success of the promotional program.

Overall, the marketing communication strategy implemented by the Passenger Transportation and Customer Care Marketing Unit of PT KAI Divre III Palembang is in line with the principles of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC). This coordinated strategy has a real impact on increasing ticket sales during Eid 2025. Based on data, the number of passengers in the last 4 years, namely in 2022, reached 53,730 people with an occupancy of 102%, then decreased to 39,105 people in 2023. In 2024, it will increase again to 69,950

passengers, an increase of 18%, and will reach its peak in 2025 with 99,039 passengers and an occupancy rate of 150%, an increase of around 20% compared to the previous year. This improvement proves that an effective marketing communication strategy is able to encourage an increase in ticket sales and strengthen public trust in PT KAI's services.

CONCLUSION

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SUGGESTIONS

For PT KAI (Persero) Divre III Palembang, it is hoped that it can continue to develop innovative and adaptive marketing communication strategies to increasingly dynamic changes in consumer behavior. The use of digital media and online platforms needs to be continuously optimized to strengthen socialization networks and expand the reach of information to the public. Through a creative and collaborative strategy, PT KAI can maintain its existence as the favorite mode of public transportation for the Indonesian people, by continuing to offer convenience, comfort, and services that suit the needs and lifestyles of current and future consumers.

For the next researcher, it is recommended to research more deeply about the effectiveness of digital marketing communication strategies or the influence of promotional programs on customer loyalty and satisfaction. Further research can also expand the object of study to other regions or divisions in PT KAI in order to obtain a broader and comparative picture of the implementation of marketing communication strategies in various regions.

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