

RESEARCH ON THE APPLICATION OF THE AIDA MODEL IN INTERNAL COMMUNICATION AT TAN TRAO UNIVERSITY

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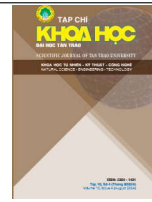
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Abstract:

The article focuses on researching the application of the AIDA model (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) in the internal communication strategy at Tan Trao University. The AIDA model has been proven to be an effective tool in marketing and communication, but its application in the educational environment is still limited. Through an analysis of the current internal communication practices at the university, the study identifies the limitations and proposes solutions for improvement based on each stage of the AIDA model. These solutions not only enhance the effectiveness of information dissemination but also promote engagement and a sense of unity among staff, faculty, employees, and students at the university.



NGHIÊN CỨU ÁP DỤNG MÔ HÌNH AIDA TRONG CÔNG TÁC TRUYỀN THÔNG NỘI BỘ TẠI TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC TÂN TRÀO

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Tóm tắt

Bài viết tập trung nghiên cứu khả năng áp dụng mô hình AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) vào chiến lược truyền thông nội bộ tại Trường Đại học Tân Trào. Mô hình AIDA đã được chứng minh là công cụ hiệu quả trong lĩnh vực tiếp thị và truyền thông, nhưng ứng dụng của nó trong môi trường giáo dục vẫn còn hạn chế. Thông qua việc phân tích thực trạng công tác truyền thông nội bộ của trường, nghiên cứu chỉ ra các hạn chế và đề xuất giải pháp cải thiện dựa trên từng giai đoạn của mô hình AIDA. Các giải pháp này không chỉ nâng cao hiệu quả truyền tải thông tin mà còn thúc đẩy sự gắn kết, tinh thần đồng hành của cán bộ, giảng viên, nhân viên và người học trong nhà trường.

1. Introduction

In the increasingly competitive landscape of higher education in Vietnam, internal communication plays a crucial role in building an institution's image and fostering cohesion among its members.

Tan Trao University is gradually establishing its position within Vietnam's higher education system. However, internal communication efforts still reveal certain limitations, particularly in ensuring consistency and effectiveness in information dissemination.

The AIDA model, with its ability to optimize each stage from capturing attention (Attention) to driving action (Action), is

expected to be a valuable tool for enhancing internal communication strategies. Nonetheless, the application of this model requires a deep understanding of its theoretical foundations, a comprehensive assessment of the current state of internal communication at Tan Trao University, an analysis of the feasibility of implementing the AIDA model, and the development of appropriate solutions.

The solutions proposed in this research will serve as practical and scientific foundations for the university to establish a sustainable internal communication strategy, contributing to its overall development and creating the image of a professional, modern, and dynamic educational environment.

2. Research Methods

Survey Method: We collected opinions from 400 individuals, including managers, experts, lecturers, staff, and students at Tan Trao University, regarding the current state of internal communication. The survey assessed the effectiveness of communication activities, identified challenges, and captured expectations for improving the efficiency of internal communication.

Document Analysis Method: Relevant documents, reports, and statistics on the university's internal communication activities were collected and analyzed. Additionally, previous studies on the application of the AIDA model in communication were reviewed to establish a theoretical foundation.

Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis Methods: Data from interviews and documents were categorized and synthesized to identify results, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges in the current state of internal communication. Survey data were processed using statistical software (SPSS or Excel) to calculate metrics such as frequencies, proportions, and averages.

Experimental and Solution Proposal Method: Based on the analysis results, internal communication solutions tailored to each stage of the AIDA model were developed and proposed. The research team conducted trials of certain internal communication strategies on a small scale to evaluate their feasibility and initial effectiveness.

3. Research Results

3.1. Theoretical Foundations of the AIDA Model in Internal Communication

The term “internal communication” has become widely used due to its frequent adoption by corporate communication theorists (Ha.H.H,

2019). According to Frank and Brownell, “internal communication is defined as the interaction between individuals and groups within organizations at various levels and across different areas of expertise.” Other scholars define internal communication as “all formal and informal communication activities within an organization at all levels,” or “the entire way people communicate with each other within an organization” (Ninh.T.N.T, 2022). Internal communication in organizations, businesses, or universities (viewed as organizations or businesses depending on specific characteristics of each institution or country) encompasses “all activities, processes, and tools used to exchange information between leadership and employees in a two-way model (leaders transmit messages while receiving feedback from subordinates)” (Nhunh.D.T.H, 2019).

With the objective of creating “a positive, cohesive, shared, creative, and attractive working environment that retains talent and fosters a committed and unified team to achieve common goals,” internal communication plays a critical role in every organization. For universities, internal communication helps the institution operate and manage work effectively while fostering connections, pride, and understanding among internal audiences.

According to Ha.H.H (2019), the internal audiences of a university consist of seven groups: “general labor and support staff, academic support staff, administrative staff, academic research staff, learners, investors, and strategic managers”. Campus Communication (2011) identifies five internal audience groups in universities: managers, lecturers, staff from functional units and service departments, researchers, and students. At Tan Trao University, We categorized internal communication audiences into: (1) Managers, (2) Staff and employees, and (3) Learners (Nhi.N.T.Y; Hoa. D.T.V; Tuan.T.A, 2019).

The AIDA model, first proposed by Elias St. Elmo Lewis in the late 19th century, comprises four main stages: **Attention**, **Interest**, **Desire**, and **Action**.



Figure 1. The AIDA Model in Marketing

Attention: This is the first stage, where the goal is to attract the target audience's attention. An effective message or communication campaign must make a strong impression and stimulate the recipient's curiosity. Elements such as striking headlines, captivating visuals, and attractive colors are commonly used in this phase.

Interest: After capturing attention, the next step is to engage the audience's interest in the content or message. This stage focuses on delivering valuable information and creating a connection between the message and the audience's needs and preferences. Common tactics include storytelling, presenting specific benefits, or using real-life examples.

Desire: This stage aims to transform interest into a desire to own or take action. The communication message should evoke positive emotions, making the audience perceive the product, service, or idea as the ideal solution to their needs. Key elements such as user testimonials, special offers, or clear illustrations of benefits are crucial in this phase.

Action: This is the final stage, where the audience performs a specific action, such as making a purchase, signing up, sharing information, or participating in an activity. This phase requires the

message to include a clear call-to-action (CTA) and provide convenient means for the audience to act. For instance, offering links, addresses, or specific contact information.

The AIDA model is a framework that many major global brands have successfully implemented in their marketing and advertising activities. Examples include Apple's AIDA model, Coca-Cola's AIDA marketing formula, Adidas's AIDA model, Nike's AIDA model, and Netflix's AIDA funnel. Currently, there are no international studies focusing on applying the AIDA model in internal communications within universities. However, some studies have addressed the use of the AIDA model, including the research titled "AIDA Model for New Ways to Communicate", which applied the AIDA model to explore and implement new communication methods, particularly in the context of modern media.

In Vietnam, there have been several studies applying the AIDA model in various fields. For instance, a thesis at the University of Economics, Hue University, titled "Applying the AIDA Model to Evaluate Online Advertising Activities of the CodeGym Programming Training System in Hue Branch", focused on using the AIDA model to assess the effectiveness of online advertising and proposed solutions to improve advertising performance for businesses. Another study, also from the University of Economics, Hue University, utilized the AIDA model to evaluate integrated marketing communications for the fiber-optic Internet services of FPT Telecom Joint Stock Company – Hue Branch. This research provided insights into the effectiveness of communication campaigns and suggested improvement measures.

Additionally, the study "Intellectual Property Management in Vietnamese Startup Enterprises: An Approach Based on the AIDA Model" applied the AIDA model in the field of intellectual property management, evaluated across four levels: awareness, protection, management, and

exploitation. These studies demonstrate that the AIDA model has been diversely applied in various fields, significantly contributing to improving marketing and management effectiveness.

However, no studies have yet explored the application of the AIDA model in internal communication within university settings. Researching the use of the AIDA model in internal communications could enhance interaction and engagement among students, faculty, and staff, while promoting active participation in university activities.

3.2. Current Status of Internal Communication at Tan Trao University

Based on the analysis of related documents, reports, research results, and a survey conducted with 400 participants, including: management staff, communication experts, lecturers, professionals, and students at Tan Trao University, the research team has identified several advantages and limitations in the internal communication work at Tan Trao University as follows:

Regarding advantages:

The university has established and operated a rich system of internal communication channels, including the website, fanpage, TikTok, Zalo, YouTube, etc., which ensures that information is disseminated to a diverse range of audiences. During the period 2021-2024, the university published an average of over 1,000 news articles, posts, and videos per year; posted 110-130 directives from the Ministry of Education & Training, Tuyen Quang Provincial People's Committee, and documents issued by the Party Committee, University Council, and the university itself. The university's social media pages have a substantial following, with the fanpage having over 40,000 followers and TikTok having over 27,000 likes and followers.

Internal communication activities help spread the core values, vision, and mission of

the university, contributing to the formation of a strong organizational culture, strengthening the collective bond, and boosting pride and solidarity within the entire institution.

According to the survey results, 92.5% of participants rated the content, messages, and communication methods (clarity, variety, and practicality) as good or excellent, and 77.5% evaluated the level of outreach of communication activities (the ability to create trends or content widely shared on social media) as good.

Regarding limitations and shortcomings:

Survey results from 370 lecturers, staff, and students of Tan Trao University regarding communication activities were assessed based on the following aspects: A1-Diversity and effectiveness of internal communication activities; A2-Collaboration and coordination among departments, units, and individuals within the university in implementing communication campaigns and activities; A3-Creativity and the ability to engage the community in communication activities; A4- The contribution of communication activities to motivation and morale for staff and students in work and study; A5- The ability of communication activities to inspire the target audience to pass on the message to others. Evaluated at the following levels: Very Good - 5 points; Good - 4 points; Average - 3 points; Poor - 2 points; Very Poor - 1 point, as follows:

Table 1. Survey Results on Internal Communication at Tan Trao University

According to the survey results in Table 1, internal communication has many strengths but also several areas that need improvement to achieve more positive outcomes. The majority of respondents rated the creativity and engagement of the community in communication activities as average, indicating a need for greater investment in creative communication products to improve results. The contribution of communication

activities in motivating and boosting the work and study spirit of staff and students reflects that the communication efforts have not fully maximized their motivational role. The majority of respondents rated the ability of communication activities to encourage recipients to forward the message to others as average, suggesting that while the message may be understood or acknowledged, it lacks enough impact or motivation to drive them to share it. This may be due to the content lacking elements that stimulate sharing behavior, such as uniqueness, strong emotions, or personalization. Therefore, innovation is required to provide higher value and encourage action among faculty and students.

When asked for feedback on the shortcomings and limitations in the communication efforts at Tan Trao University, 72.25% of respondents selected financial limitations, while 45.25% identified internal communication as a major limitation. Therefore, internal communication is regarded as the second biggest limitation that needs to be reviewed and improved in order to optimize the university's communication efforts.

3.3. Solutions for Applying the AIDA Model at Tan Trao University

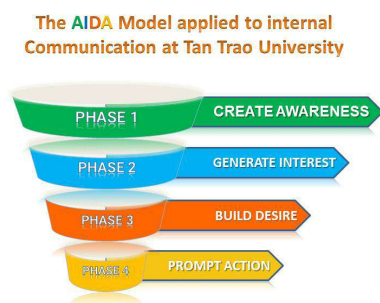


Figure 2. The AIDA Model Applied to Internal Communication at Tan Trao University

To effectively apply the AIDA model, Tan Trao University needs to implement a series of coordinated and systematic solutions in each specific phase as follows:

Phase 1: Create Awareness

In this phase, it is essential to enhance the use of online communication channels such as email, the university's website, social media, and bulletin boards to update information about events, activities, and important matters within the university. It is important to identify the types of information that the internal community is interested in. This information could relate to work, the university's future development, collective life, the labor union, youth union, and the thoughts and aspirations of staff, employees, and students.

Creative communication methods should be used to capture the attention of staff, employees, and students in the university. For example, using infographics, banners, videos, posters, flyers, and billboards to provide information about events, programs, or specific activities and policies.

Organizing conferences and seminars to discuss policies or changes in university regulations ensures everyone is informed and has a clear understanding. It is also important to invite leadership to share important messages, thus creating attention and increasing awareness across the entire university.

Phase 2: Generate Interest

In this phase, the university should provide detailed, clear, and meaningful information tailored to each group, helping members understand the goals, benefits, and significance of internal activities.

Frequent publication of articles about programs, courses, or events within the university is essential. Stories from students, faculty, and staff who have participated in the university's activities can be used to build trust, inspire, and increase interest. Opportunities should be created for staff, faculty, and students to meet and exchange information. Encouraging feedback from staff, faculty, and students through online surveys, discussion boards, or other mechanisms will help create a platform for

everyone to express interest and contribute ideas for the university's development.

Phase 3: Build Desire

This phase focuses on creating a desire to participate in the university's internal activities. It is important to link information with personal benefits, clearly outlining the direct advantages that students, faculty, and staff can gain from their daily work or academic activities.

To achieve this, communication efforts should emphasize the specific values and benefits members can achieve by participating in activities. Emotional connections between members should be fostered by sharing inspiring stories, meaningful activities, or scholarship opportunities that encourage both students and staff to feel motivated to participate. Encouraging interactive activities such as organizing competitions, sports events, cultural events, or talent shows will also spark interest and desire to take part in the university's activities. Internal communication materials should introduce the roles and contributions of members, making staff, faculty, and students feel like proud members of the university. By creating highlights and practical values, the university will stimulate the desire of members to engage and contribute to the university's work and learning environment.

Phase 4: Prompt Action

One of the principles of communication is that the more frequent and equal the interaction between the subject and the audience, and the more people proactively engage, the higher the communication effectiveness and capacity (David G. Tucker, 2017). Therefore, internal communication should be given more attention to build trust and cohesion among members of the university, so that every staff member, faculty, and student becomes a creator of the university's communication messages based on positive emotions developed during their connection with the university.

In the final stage, to encourage members of the university to take specific actions, the university needs to provide clear and easily understandable calls to action along with detailed instructions on how to register for activities. The university should create favorable conditions for faculty, staff, and students to easily take the steps to register or participate, through online forms or QR codes linking to registration information. At the end of each program or activity, there should be forms of recognition, rewards, or promotion to motivate faculty, staff, and students to continue participating in future activities.

3.4. Initial Trial Results

In the trial phase (from September to December 2024), the AIDA model was applied to enhance the effectiveness of internal communication, with specific steps carried out in four stages: Creating awareness, generating interest, ensuring desire, and activating action. The specific results are as follows:

Stage 1: Creating Awareness

The university organized meetings for faculty and staff, dialogues between the Rector and students, annual year-end reviews, and the launch of new academic year tasks. These included meetings for academic advisory work, monthly briefings, and soft skills training for students to ensure all stakeholders were aware of and understood their tasks, rights, and responsibilities. To attract the attention of faculty, students, and staff, the communication department increased the design and use of banners, infographics, videos, flyers, posters, and billboards to introduce and provide information about events, programs, and activities at the university, province, and industry levels.

Stage 2: Generating Interest

The university and academic departments actively organized workshops, seminars, and training sessions. The Youth Union and Student

Association actively organized extracurricular, academic, and volunteer activities for students, attracting widespread participation from youth union members.

The university's communication channels published and shared 763 news articles, banners, infographics, and videos about notable educational activities, provincial events in Tuyên Quang, the university's general activities, and students' experiences and reflections on their teachers and peers.

Stage 3: Ensuring Desire

The university's communication channels shared 17 articles highlighting achievements and inspiring stories from students and faculty, generating a total of over 219,000 views/interactions. The high engagement rate shows that the content aligned with the audience's interest in receiving information, creating attraction, and spreading widely. It also reflects the level of attention and active participation of the community in the shared content.

Stage 4: Activating Action

During this stage, university departments, faculty, and students actively engaged in internal communications. A clear demonstration of this involvement was the posting of 158 videos/images/articles on various communication channels, initiated and provided by departments and individuals themselves to the communication team. Each department had its own Zalo group to exchange internal information, and many created separate fanpages to share content from the university's official page. These activities showcased the efforts to encourage action within the school, successfully building a positive communication community and promoting a sense of responsibility and initiative in participating and contributing to the overall communication work.

The university rewarded students and faculty who guided students in scientific research and

received awards at the university level, as well as individuals with outstanding achievements in disaster response. Recognition was also given to individuals and groups who excelled during the 2023-2024 academic year, including those awarded the "Five-Good Student" title at both the university and provincial levels. Competitions such as the Lữ học sinh Lào volleyball tournament, male students' football tournament, volleyball competition for faculty and staff, and cultural performances to welcome the 2024-2025 academic year, alongside the 42nd anniversary of Vietnam Teachers' Day, all received timely awards and commendations, creating trust and attention towards the ongoing campaigns and activities among faculty, staff, and students.

4. Conclusion

This research has contributed to clarifying the potential of applying the AIDA model in improving the effectiveness of internal communications at Tan Trao University. The implementation of the AIDA model in internal communications during the pilot phase at Tan Trao University has yielded positive results, providing clear evidence of effectiveness in each stage of deployment.

Applying the AIDA model to the university's internal communication practice not only brings immediate benefits but also lays the foundation for a sustainable communication strategy, supporting the university's development in the current highly competitive environment. The results of this research can serve as a basis for applying the AIDA model in subsequent years and expanding it to other areas of education, contributing to the comprehensive enhancement of the activities at Tan Trao University.

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