

## Strategic Communication master's degree – Case study evaluation

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**Format:** Please make sure you 1) Include **your name** on the document, 2) Save the file with your name, 3) Save the file as a pdf and upload on the online platform at the end of the exam

**Evaluation:** Read the 3 questions. Make sure you answer to all. Maximize your time for thinking, analysing and recommending, rather than finding new info.

Therefore, make sure you base your arguments (opinion/solutions).

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### Case study

#### *An introduction to the company*

Axpo Italia, a subsidiary of the Swiss Axpo Group that is active for 100 years in the energy market, is now one of the main operators at the national level and boasts excellent performance on B2B with the best brand equity in the energy market and high recommendation. In addition to the sales sector, Axpo Italia is also active in trading, playing a primary role in the different energy commodity and derivative exchanges: this is also attested by prestigious awards, such as the Energy Risk Award, where Axpo appears in the top positions year after year. Axpo Italia offers on the Italian market a wide range of products capable of meeting the energy needs of companies and consumers, providing customized solutions for the consumption of energy, natural gas and energy from renewable sources. Moreover, thanks to its consolidated experience in the production market, Axpo is able to provide professional support also for independent producers. Based in Italy since 2000, Axpo Italia is the Italian branch of the multinational Axpo Group, and today has more than 250 employees among its offices in Genova, Rome and Milan.

On 22 October 2019, Axpo Italia breaks the rules of the energy market and enters the field by launching PULSEE, which aims to be:

- Leader in innovation.
- Close to customers and their personal needs.
- Smarter & Faster.
- Coolness – “must have brand.”

Pulsee is the consumer brand for Italian customers of the Axpo Group.

Axpo Italia, apart from being the company behind Pulsee with its historical know-how in the energy industry, focused mainly on the non-consumer market, represents an important corporate reference point for its solidity, reliability and experience. On the other hand, Pulsee is the brand on which AXPO has decided to concentrate its marketing investments for the B2C sector and is able to offer all its customers the benefits that derive from an ever-increasing digitization of its processes and from the numerous strategic partnerships that connect it to the Italian territory. Pulsee is increasingly becoming a brand for the consumer and part of the national fabric.

#### *Communication aims.*

The company has decided to implement communication plan that meets the following objectives:

- Brand awareness.
- Customer acquisition.
- Loyalty and enhancement of early adopters who have already chosen Pulsee.

#### *Some previously analysis*

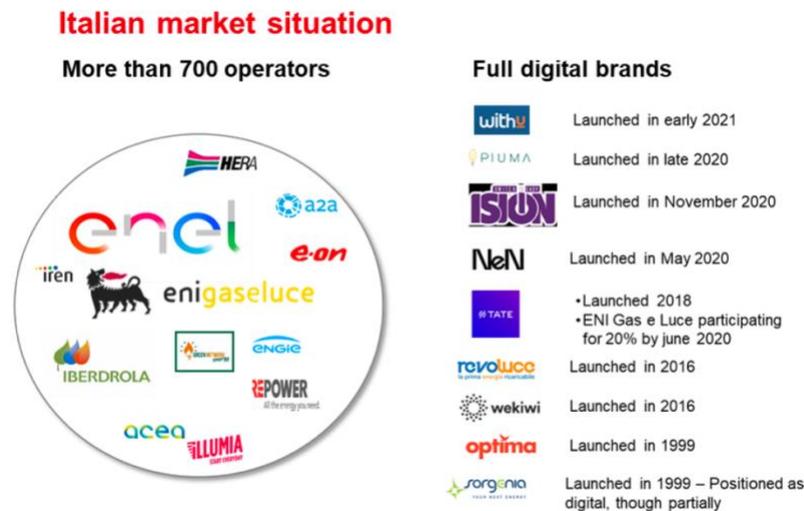
The Italian and European utilities are going through a phase of strong change due to the evolution of the current competitive context, where to undertake an economically sustainable path, it becomes fundamentally understand and be able to satisfy the needs and expectations of an always more aware client base.

In Italy, in order to develop the domestic energy market and encourage market competition, the legislator has provided the definitive overcoming of the Protection regime starting from 1st January 2023.

It is precisely in this context of changing that utilities are moving, starting a transformation process with the aim of seize opportunities given by the user base that is freeing itself from the limitations of the regime. At the same time, it has the aim of limiting the risks that arise from a market certainly more competitive, without constraints and more focused on the needs of always more demanding users regarding their experience with the energy supplier, whether through physical or digital channels.

However, it is a commodity market, in which the main driver of choice by the user is the price (the Italian user is less loyal to the brand than Europeans) and in which they move, thanks to the low barriers to entry, more than 700 operators.

Therefore, a highly competitive market with a low level of differentiation, where the game used to be played on the service and on the "trust" that is created towards its customers.



In terms of shares, the free electricity market is still dominated by Enel, with a share of 27%, followed by Edison (7%), A2A (5.9%) and Axpo (5.2%), of which Pulsee is part. All the other operators follow, with minimal shares, to testify to the great fragmentation of the market.

From the research carried out within the Pulsee project, the following pain points and trends are evident:

- New Families: single or atypical families (cohabiting without children, divorced, etc.) are an eloquent example of the new consumer orientations, with a strong individualization in choices and an intolerance towards market proposals that are generally not studied for specific needs.
- Tribalism: the family loses its centrality by virtue of the circles of friends, colleagues, influences.
- Forced roommates: people who choose cohabitation for economic reasons are growing in number and age, not only more students but also professionals and over 35s.
- Constant change: the possibility to change at any time, instability, freedom of action are increasingly perceived as a value rather than a threat. Maximum liquidity to respond to ever-changing needs according to the personal routine.
- Gender Free: the genre is changeable, liquid, not cataloged. Offers dedicated to men or women are experienced as classist, segregating.

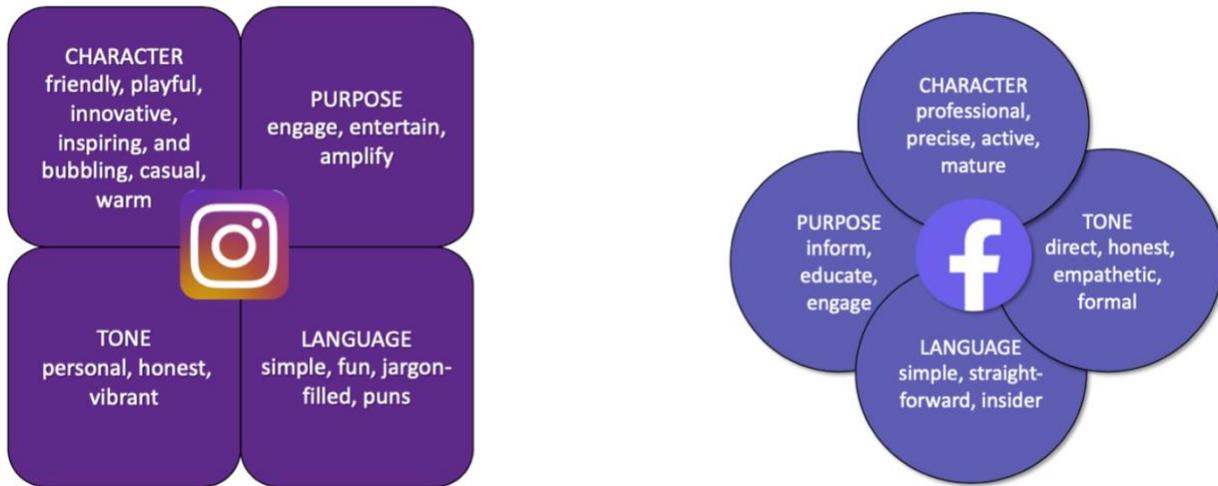
### ***Communication strategy and tactics***

In the communication campaign different strategies will be implemented depending on the three phases awareness, behavioral, affective but also on where the target public is within these phases.

- Acquisition strategy: to increase brand awareness, Pulsee has to attract strangers to its products but more importantly to its 100% digital environment driven by innovation and simplicity.
- Conversion strategy: by converting prospects and individuals that already know Pulsee, people's engagement and acquisition of the products will increase.
- Retention strategy: to increase the relationship and loyalty between the company and Pulsee's early adopters.

The organization believes that the combination between these three digital marketing strategies will maximize the performance and the effectiveness of our integrated communication campaign. Other than these strategies the communication manager has taken into consideration the public relational aspect of the company implementing a conversational human voice strategy, highlighting the social media brand voice that Pulsee

will have on the two social media on which we have decided to focus the campaign on Instagram, and Facebook.



The organization came out with different tactics that will be implemented in a time frame that goes from January 2022 and June 2022. The initiatives have been part of an integrated communication campaign which will be implemented both online and offline.

From the qualitative analysis it was evident that Pulsee wasn't associated with anyone. No top management or even employees were shown on their social media platforms. This "impersonality" would prevent people from choosing Pulsee over other energy providers because of low levels of trust. So, the organization decided to propose a series of interviews followed with the hashtag #ScopriltuoPulsee that have been posted twice a month, one interview per week. In every interview a different Pulsee's employee has been interviewed. The interviews were funny and very informal but at the same time gave the chance to the public to understand and perceive the faces that are behind all the different social media profiles. By the end of the campaign, users knew every inch of Pulsee. This represented a way to open the company even more to the public allowing a stronger relationship to happen as it was with a "friend". The video of the interview has been posted on Instagram, Facebook, and Youtube. Always taking into consideration the concept of "giving a face" to Pulsee, the organization decided to strengthen its customer service by adding the possibility on the website to use Skype or Teams to directly call and talk "face to face" with a person. Together with the addition of a new feature of the website, a mascot has been also introduced . Pulsee's new avatar is a little robot, named "Lil Pulsee", drawn in the style of a Disney Pixar cartoon, in 3D version, colored with the colors of the company with a Jetpack that shoots smoke in the colors of the rainbow to stay in line with the company's mission and LGBTQ+ group.

For the main and only offline activity, the organization decided to install a billboard in three Italian cities, specifically Milan, Rome and Turin and their main feature is to be interactive. The billboard has been placed under a tent near two hostesses that has one small purple bag each. The idea is that people could get closer to the billboard and when facing the screen, they could see a purple screen with some stripes of the main colors of Pulsee and at the center of the screen there will be a button that says "Click here!". Once it is pressed, the screen changed completely, Pulsee logo will come out with its slogan under that say "With the right energy you can do whatever you want". Then the screen changed again, and it has included a video with Pulsee's new avatar. The screen featured an animation of the avatar showing up and asking one or two questions related to sustainability and environmental issues, which the interacting individuals could answer. From True or False questions to questions with multiple choice, for whichever way they answer, they received as a gadget either a Pulsee notebook, if the answer is correct, or a Pulsee keychain, if the answer given is wrong.

Evaluation assesses Formative, Summative and Accountability KPIs, in order to measure if the tactics of the communication campaign were successful in terms of achieving the objectives. This has been done taking into consideration the PESO model, the online communicative objective (awareness, activation, advocacy) and the

logic model for the formative level; reputation and relational capital for the summative level; consumption, containment and conversion for the accountability level.

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**Based on the case study please answer to the following questions:**

**Question 1. By considering the preliminary research activities, do you think that the organization could have implemented some other analyses? What about SWOT and PEST analysis? Do you mind describing these to managerial tools and evaluate if they could be useful for Pulsee organization?**

**Question 2. Nowadays the organizations are required to implement an integrated communication campaign. How could you evaluate both online and offline tactics implemented by Pulsee? Are they aligned? Do you mind suggesting some changes or the implementation of more specific communication tactics to achieve results?**

**Question 3. Measuring results in communication field is crucial for evaluating if aims have been achieved and how to manage and distribute resources. How do you evaluate the measurement process implemented by the organization. Do you suggest some metrics to consider or some method to implement for collecting data?**