

# THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN SHAPING ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTITY

A hand holding a megaphone, symbolizing communication and media. The megaphone is purple and black, and the hand is dark-skinned. The background is a light gray with faint, semi-transparent icons of a play button, a speech bubble, and a document.

**A Case Study of The Aviary Club of Nigeria**

“In today’s digital world, organizations are increasingly judged not only by their actions but also by how effectively they communicate those actions to society.”

**By Avian Goodluck Edobor**

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# Introduction

In today's highly connected world, media has become one of the most influential tools in shaping how organizations are perceived, understood, and remembered. From traditional media outlets such as newspapers, radio, and television to modern digital platforms including social media, blogs, podcasts, and online news channels, media plays a critical role in defining organizational identity.

Organizational identity refers to the collective image, values, culture, mission, and reputation that distinguish an organization from others. It is the answer to the question: "Who are we as an organization?" Media influences how this identity is formed internally among members and externally among the public. For social organizations, humanitarian groups, and leadership-based associations, media serves as a bridge between the organization and the society it seeks to influence. Through strategic communication, organizations can project values, inspire loyalty, strengthen unity, and establish credibility.

The Aviary Club of Nigeria stands as a notable example of how media can shape and strengthen organizational identity. Through public statements, humanitarian campaigns, social media activities, official publications, leadership communication, and community engagement, the organization continues to define its image within society.

As organizations compete not only for profit but also for relevance, credibility, loyalty, and public trust, the strategic use of media has become essential for survival and growth.

## Understanding Organizational Identity

### Meaning of Organizational Identity

Organizational identity encompasses the beliefs, principles, values, symbols, culture, communication style, and behavioral standards that define an institution and distinguish it from others.

According to organizational theorists, identity is built through consistent interaction between the organization and its stakeholders.

Albert and Whetten (1985), pioneers in organizational identity research, described organizational identity as the central, enduring, and distinctive characteristics of an organization. This means that the way an organization

communicates through media directly affects how society perceives its values and legitimacy. In essence, identity answers the question:

### **“Who are we as an organization?”**

This means that organizational identity is built around:

- What the organization stands for,
- What it believes in,
- How members behave,
- How leadership operates,
- How the public perceives the organization.

Organizational identity is not merely a logo, slogan, or uniform. It is the collective image formed through values, actions, culture, communication, and reputation.

Media therefore acts as both:

- A mirror reflecting organizational culture.
- A megaphone amplifying organizational values and actions.

For organizations like the Aviary Club of Nigeria, identity is built through:

- Leadership structure
- Organizational values
- Public conduct
- Humanitarian activities
- Member discipline
- Public communication
- Media representation

Media therefore becomes an essential instrument in preserving and projecting these values to society.

### **Components of Organizational Identity**

## **1. Organizational Values**

Values are the principles that guide the behavior and decisions of members within an organization. Examples include, Discipline Brotherhood, Integrity, Leadership, Accountability, Service to humanity.

These values influence how members conduct themselves both internally and publicly.

## **2. Organizational Culture**

Culture refers to the shared beliefs, traditions, customs, and behavioral patterns practiced within the organization.

A strong organizational culture promotes: Unity, Loyalty, Respect, Teamwork, Stability. Culture helps members develop a sense of belonging and emotional attachment to the organization.

## **3. Leadership Structure**

Leadership significantly shapes organizational identity. The behavior, decisions, communication style, and vision of leaders often determine how the organization is perceived.

Organizations with disciplined and visionary leadership are more likely to build strong public credibility.

## **4. Symbols and Traditions**

Organizational symbols such as logos, colors, uniforms, slogans, ceremonies, and traditions contribute to identity formation.

These symbols create recognition and strengthen emotional connection among members.

## **The Importance of Organizational Identity**

A strong organizational identity provides several benefits:

### **1. Promotes Unity**

Shared identity strengthens cooperation and solidarity among members.

### **2. Encourages Discipline**

Clear organizational values help regulate behavior and maintain standards.

### **3. Builds Public Trust**

Organizations with strong identity and ethical conduct gain credibility within society.

### **4. Enhances Growth and Stability**

Organizations with defined identity are more likely to maintain long-term relevance and institutional stability.

### **5. Inspires Loyalty and Commitment**

Members who identify strongly with organizational values are more committed to its success.

## **The Role of Media in Shaping Organizational Identity**

Media refers to the various channels used for communication and information dissemination. These include:

- Television,
- Radio,
- Newspapers,
- Social media,
- Websites,
- Digital publications,

- Online platforms.

In modern society, media has become one of the strongest influences on public perception and organizational reputation.

*“For the Aviary Club of Nigeria, media serves as a strategic instrument for promoting its mission, activities, and organizational principles.”*

The Role of Media in Shaping Organizational Identity are as follows

## **1. Media Creates Public Perception**

The media significantly determines how the public views an organization. Positive media coverage can elevate an organization’s reputation, while negative publicity can damage credibility and trust within moments.

Organizations that consistently communicate professionalism, accountability, innovation, and social responsibility through media channels often gain stronger public confidence.

For example:

- Humanitarian organizations use media to project compassion and social impact .
- Security organizations use media to project strength, discipline, and reliability.
- Corporate organizations use media to promote excellence, innovation, and customer trust.

Through repeated exposure, audiences begin associating those traits with the organization itself.

## **2. Media Strengthens Brand Identity**

Brand identity goes beyond logos and slogans. It includes the emotional and psychological connection people have with an organization.

Through strategic storytelling, visuals, interviews, campaigns, documentaries, and social media engagement, organizations build recognizable identities that influence loyalty and public support.

A strong media presence helps organizations:

- Establish visibility.
- Communicate their mission clearly.
- Promote organizational values.
- Inspire confidence among stakeholders.
- Differentiate themselves from competitors.

According to Keller (2013), consistent brand communication strengthens brand equity and public attachment to organizations.

### **3. Social Media Has Revolutionized Organizational Identity**

The rise of digital media has transformed how organizations interact with the public. Unlike traditional media, social media allows immediate communication, real-time engagement, and direct audience participation.

Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X (formerly Twitter), LinkedIn, and YouTube enable organizations to:

- Control narratives.
- Respond quickly to criticism.
- Showcase achievements.
- Promote transparency.
- Humanize leadership.
- Mobilize communities.

Organizations that effectively manage their digital presence often appear more modern, responsive, and trustworthy.

However, the speed of social media also means reputational damage can spread rapidly if communication is poorly handled.

## **4. Media Influences Internal Organizational Culture**

Media does not only shape external perception; it also affects internal identity among members and employees.

Internal newsletters, broadcasts, leadership speeches, videos, digital forums, and organizational publications reinforce:

- Shared values.
- Group unity.
- Institutional goals.
- Ethical standards.
- Organizational pride.

When members consistently consume media promoting the organization's mission and culture, they develop a stronger sense of belonging and commitment .

This is especially important for clubs, associations, security groups, humanitarian organizations, and multinational corporations where unity and discipline are essential.

## **5. Crisis Communication and Organizational Identity**

During crises, media becomes one of the most powerful determinants of organizational survival.

Organizations that respond transparently, responsibly, and professionally during controversies are more likely to maintain public trust. Poor communication, silence, misinformation, or defensive responses often worsen reputational damage.

Effective crisis communication includes:

- Timely updates.
- Clear facts.
- Accountability.
- Empathy.
- Consistent messaging.

Coombs (2007), in *Situational Crisis Communication Theory*, emphasizes that communication strategies significantly influence stakeholder perception during crises.

## **The Dangers of Poor Media Management**

While media can strengthen organizational identity, poor media handling can produce devastating effects.

Some dangers include:

- Loss of public trust.
- Internal division.
- Reputation damage.
- Spread of misinformation.
- Reduced stakeholder confidence.
- Decline in membership or support.
- Legal and ethical controversies.

Organizations must therefore ensure that official communication reflects professionalism, discipline, accuracy, and organizational values.

# Strategic Media Management for Organizations

To effectively shape a positive organizational identity, organizations should:

## 1. Develop Clear Communication Policies

Organizations should establish guidelines governing public statements, social media conduct, branding, and crisis communication.

## 2. Maintain Consistency

Consistent messaging strengthens identity and prevents confusion.

## 3. Invest in Media Relations

Healthy relationships with journalists, media houses, and digital influencers improve visibility and credibility.

## 4. Promote Ethical Communication

Truthfulness and transparency are essential for long-term trust.

## 5. Train Media Representatives

Spokespersons and media teams should understand organizational values and communication strategy.

## **6. Monitor Public Perception**

Organizations should regularly assess how they are viewed by members and the public.

## **Overview of the Aviary Club of Nigeria**

The Aviary Club of Nigeria is a social and humanitarian-oriented organization that promotes brotherhood, discipline, leadership, unity, community development, and social responsibility among its members.

The organization has continued to expand its presence through:

- Humanitarian interventions
- Youth engagement
- Public advocacy
- Leadership initiatives
- Social development programs
- Public enlightenment campaigns

As the organization grows, maintaining a strong and positive identity becomes increasingly important. Media serves as one of the primary tools through which this identity is communicated and reinforced.

## **The Role of Media in Shaping the Identity of the Aviary Club of Nigeria**

### **1. Media Promotes Aviary Club Visibility**

One of the most important functions of media is visibility. Through social media platforms, digital flyers, press releases, event coverage, and online publications, the Aviary Club of Nigeria increases awareness about its activities and objectives.

Media visibility helps:

- Introduce the organization to the public.
- Promote organizational programs.
- Attract potential members.
- Strengthen public recognition.
- Showcase achievements and impact.

Without media presence, many organizational efforts may remain unnoticed regardless of their significance.

## **2. Media Communicates Aviary Club Values**

Every organization is defined by its values and principles. Through official communication channels, the Aviary Club of Nigeria consistently projects messages centered around:

- Discipline
- Brotherhood
- Leadership
- Responsibility
- Unity
- Humanitarian service
- Social development

Public statements, speeches, campaigns, and media publications help shape how society interprets these values.

For instance, public condemnations of social injustice, advocacy against police brutality, and calls for national development portray the organization as socially conscious and people-oriented.

Media therefore transforms organizational values from internal beliefs into Public identity

### **3. The Use of Social Media in Strengthening Aviary Club Identity**

Digital media has revolutionized organizational communication. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, WhatsApp, and X (formerly Twitter) allow organizations to interact directly with members and the public.

The Aviary Club of Nigeria utilizes social media to:

- Share updates and announcements.
- Promote events and activities.
- Publish humanitarian efforts.
- Encourage member participation.
- Reinforce organizational culture.
- Engage wider audiences.

Social media also creates a sense of community among members across different locations and provinces. Members who consistently engage with organizational content develop stronger emotional attachment and loyalty to the organization.

According to Castells (2010), digital communication networks significantly influence collective identity and social organization in modern society.

### **4. How Media Enhances Public Reputation for The Aviary Club**

Reputation is one of the most valuable assets of any organization. Positive media representation strengthens credibility and public trust.

When the Aviary Club of Nigeria is associated with:

- Community development,
- Peace advocacy,

- Humanitarian outreach,
- Leadership initiatives,
- Social responsibility,

the public begins to perceive the organization as responsible, disciplined, and impactful .

Consistent positive media engagement helps counter stereotypes, misinformation, and negative assumptions that may arise against social organizations.

## **5. Media Encourages Internal Unity and Discipline With the Aviary Club**

Media is not only directed outward, it also shapes internal organizational culture.

Official publications, speeches, circulars, announcements, and educational materials help reinforce:

- Organizational standards,
- Ethical conduct,
- Discipline,
- Loyalty,
- Shared goals.

For example, internal advisories encouraging responsible behavior and proper public representation remind members that they are ambassadors of the organization.

Through repeated communication, media strengthens collective identity and organizational unity.

## **6. The Aviary Club use of Media as a Tool for Advocacy and Social Impact**

Modern organizations are increasingly expected to contribute to national development and social discourse.

The Aviary Club of Nigeria has used media platforms to:

- Speak against police brutality,
- Advocate for justice and accountability,
- Promote peace and security,
- Encourage youth empowerment,
- Support humanitarian causes.

These advocacy efforts shape the organization's identity as not merely a social body, but also a socially responsible institution committed to positive societal change.

Media gives organizations a voice capable of influencing public opinion and inspiring action.

## **7. The Aviary Club use of media for crisis management**

In every organization, crises and controversies may arise. During such moments, media management becomes extremely important.

Proper communication during difficult periods helps:

- Prevent misinformation,
- Protect organizational reputation,
- Maintain public trust,
- Reassure members,
- Clarify organizational positions.

Organizations that fail to manage communication effectively during crises often suffer reputational damage.

The Aviary Club of Nigeria's emphasis on official communication and public clarification demonstrates the importance of media in preserving institutional identity.

## **Research Recommendations**

To further strengthen organizational identity through media, the Aviary Club of Nigeria should continue to:

### **1. Maintain Professional Media Communication**

Official statements should remain clear, respectful, and value-driven

### **2. Strengthen Digital Presence**

Consistent online engagement improves visibility and relevance.

### **3. Promote Positive Storytelling**

Highlighting humanitarian achievements strengthens public trust

### **4. Train Media Representatives**

Communication teams should understand branding and crisis communication.

### **5. Encourage Responsible Member Conduct**

Members should reflect organizational values both online and offline.

### **6. Develop Media Policies**

Structured communication guidelines help preserve organizational identity.

## Conclusion

Media remains one of the most powerful forces shaping organizational identity in contemporary society. Through communication, storytelling, advocacy, public engagement, and digital interaction, organizations define how they are perceived internally and externally.

The Aviary Club of Nigeria demonstrates how strategic media use can strengthen visibility, promote unity, reinforce discipline, encourage humanitarian service, and establish a respected public image.

As media continues to evolve in the digital age, organizations must recognize that every public message contributes to their legacy and reputation. For the Aviary Club of Nigeria, effective media engagement is not merely a communication strategy, it is a vital instrument for growth, influence, unity, and organizational sustainability.

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## **Author's Note**

This research paper, titled “The Role of Media in Shaping Organizational Identity,” was carefully researched and compiled by Avian Goodluck Edobor, a holder of a Higher National Diploma (HND) in Computer Science from Auchi Polytechnic and a Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) degree in Computer Science from Wellspring University.

As the Content and Social Media Manager for the Aviary Club of Nigeria, the author has drawn from both academic research and practical experience in organizational communication, media engagement, and public representation. The references cited throughout this work served as foundational sources that guided the development of the research, while personal observations, professional encounters, and real-life experiences in media and organizational activities also contributed significantly to the perspectives presented in this paper.

This work reflects a sincere effort to examine the influence of media on organizational identity, reputation, culture, and public perception, with the hope that it will contribute meaningfully to academic discourse and practical understanding in the field of organizational communication and media studies.

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# The Role of the media in shaping organizational identity

A case study of Aviary Club of Nigeria